The Sufficiency of the SPIRIT'S TEACHING Without Humane Learning.

OR,

A Treatise, tending to prove Humane-Learning to be no help to the spiritual understanding of the Word of God.

Written (if it may be) for the silencing of such false and scandalous Reports, as have been rumoured about concerning this matter; And also for the affording of true Information to all such as desire to know the Truth.

By *SAMUEL HOW.*

Pro. 14. 5. *A faithful Witnes will not lie: but a false record wil speak lies.*

Esay 57. 14. *Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people.*

Mal. 2. 1, 2. *And now ô ye Priests, this Commandement is for you; if ye will not hear it, nor consider it in your heart, to give glory to my Name (saith the Lord of Hosts) I will even send a curse upon you, and will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not consider it in your heart.*

Matth. 11. 25, 26. *At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these thing from the wise and men of understanding, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father, because thy good pleasure was such.*

Luke 16. 15. *Then he said unto them, Ye are they that justifie your selves before men, but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.*

Matth. 11. 6. *And blessed is he that shall not be offended in me.*

See also Esay 29. 14. *and* Rev. 2. 24, 25.

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To all such as love the TRUTH in sincerity, Light and Understanding be multiplied through JESUS CHRIST.

GOD'S *gracious promise it is* (*Christian Reader*) That by the (*a*) breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming, he will reveal the Man of Sin, and Son of Perdition: *Yet thus witnesseth the Spirit, that when it shall so come to passe*, that the Vial of God's wrath shall be (*b*) poured upon the Throne of the Beast, *to the darkning of his Kingdom, and discovering of those strong Delusions, whereby he hath long deluded the World; that then the men of that Throne* shall gnaw their tongues for sorrow, and shal blaspheme the God of Heaven.

(*a*) 2 Thes. 2. 8.

(*b*) Revel. 16. 10, 11.

All which to me appears to be fulfilled and made good concerning this following Treatise: 1. That when as the Lord by his VVord, the breath of his mouth, hath blown out some smoak of the bottomless Pit, which I conceive to be *Humane Learning*, which is so much magnified, as being a help, whereby to understand the mind of God.

This matter hath so vexed and tormented the men of that Throne, that even he himself at whose request I was moved to open this portion of Scripture, 2 Pet. 3.16. *hath (as I am credibly informed) reported about this City, That I made a Calf, (meaning a false and unsound exposition) and when I had done, danced about it; herein exposing not only me, but the very Truth it self, which I in this point delivered, to the derision and contempt, and table-talk of such as had rather be deceived,*

ved, and believe their Learned Teachers (as men call them) on their bare word, (having the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord of Glory, with respect of Person) then to receive and justifie the Truth of* God, *if the Messenger be weak and contemptible, and his Message in power, much plainness and demonstration of the Spirit; And not beautified with excellency of speech, and swelling words of man's wisdom, which is* enmity to God. *It crosseth and opposeth the simplicity of his way in the* dispensation of the glorious Mysterie of the Gospel. *And therefore God hath said of it, as* Simon Peter *said to* Simon Magus, (c) Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter.

(c) Act. 8. 21.

1 Cor. 1. 19.

But yet (me thinks) such men (d) *as would carry the* shew of Godliness, *should remember the Counsel of the Apostle,* that such carriages are things not seemly;

(d) Ephes. 5. 4.

though for my own part, I blesse the Lord *for it, being to me a more strong confirmation, that I have the Truth on my side:*
(e) Luke 16 14. *For thus was* (e) Jesus Christ our Lord *served by the wise and learned* Pharisees, *when as he taught them such a Doctrine as pleased them not. And thus was* Paul *the Preacher of Righteousnesse dealt by of the*
(f) Act. 17. 18. *learned* (f) Athenians, *even for preaching* Iesus, *and the Resurrection. Likewise, I read in* Heb. 11. *that this in former times was part of the trial that the* Lord *exercised his Witnesses withall, even* mockings, *vers.* 36. *And therefore, as our Saviour teacheth me, I have in this case great cause to be* glad *and rejoyce; for they having so served Jesus Christ my Lord, and his faithful followers; then what am I, that I should be one of that number that*
(g) Mat. 5. 12. *have so large* (g) incouragement *and* reward promised? *I shall therfore quietly*

etly passe by all such things, and only with Iob (*h*) *in his distressed condition, crave,* (*h*) Job, 21. 3. *That he, and all you that have done this thing, will* suffer me to speak, and when I have spoken, mock on; *seeing, as the* (*i*) *Servant of God said,* Indeed, because (*i*) Job, 12. 2. ye are the people only, Wisdom must die with you: *so will I make bold to say to you also. Yet, for all his* Understanding, *and such others as heard me, they failed of their* zeal for God, *and his* glory, *in that they sought not to suppresse and throw down that* Calf of dishonor, *which must needs (being an Idol) be a very high provocation in the eyes of his Glory, which he that put me upon this Exercise having excepted against it, when it was finisht, and with much passion manifested his great dislike thereof before many witnesses, ought especially, and was obliged to have done, being then lovingly requested by a friend*

that

that was there present, for the satisfaction of all that Assembly, to instance, if not in all, yet at least in some particular Scripture, wherein I had perverted it, seeing he had openly cast an aspersion on all that I had said; but neither he, nor any of his Profession, though many were then present, did undertake this task, nor yet to this day hath he, nor any of them endeavoured it. So it may appear my Error was not so great, or none at all, that they could prove; or else their zeal *to God, and his Truth, and their* charity *to me, and others, very small. And if there were a Calf, it was their* Humane Learning *and* Wisdom, *which the men of this Throne set up, and themselves danced about it, whilest I, to their great grief and discontent, was labouring with all the power and might that* God *assisted me with, utterly to cast down, grind it to powder, and to blow it away*

with

with the Word of God, with the breath of his mouth. *Whether it be thus, or no, I commend now to the judgment of all such as love and know the* Truth; *not doubting but there will be some found, that out of love will reprove what is amiss, and so* turn the sinner out of the error of his way; *though some others, as* (*k*) Job *saith,* forge lies, (*as I could name divers*) who are Physicians of no value.

(*k*) Job, 13. 4.

For God, who knows the hearts of all men, *knows that it was not my intent at all at that time to have medled in this Argument, nor with this Scripture, nor till the night before I spake of it, and all because I knew if I did, it would be offensive, as it hath proved: and what I did herein, it was by the advice of Friends, but now I see that Gods hand was in it, and I doubt not but for good; though it is, and may be my portion deeply to suffer for it: And for*

men to be offended at the Truth, *and such as declare it, is no new thing, even for the* (*l*) Builders *themselves to stumble at the stumbling-stone*: But leaving all such to stand or fall to their own Lord.

(*l*) Psalm. 118. 22. Act. 4. 11. Esay 8. 14, 15.

Something remains to be spoken concerning the matter following, for the preventing of such things as may further be objected against it.

1. *Though the matter be the same in substance that it was at the first delivery, yet somewhat may be wanting, and is, which was then said; and more is added in other respects then at that time was spoken, which I thought fit to give notice of.*

2. *Another Exception, and that of great moment, is, That I have blasphemed against* Iesus Christ, *in saying, that He was without* Humane Learning.

Now, besides what is answered hereunto in the first Objection belonging to the first

first Doctrine, if any yet remain unsatisfied, and will affirm the contrary, Let them declare (*as the* (*m*) *Apostle saith*) who was his Counsellour, and who taught him, and he shall be recompenced. *The Scripture tels us,* that He grew in wisdom and stature, *and so coupleth them alike together. Now none will affirm that He learned His* stature: *then from the like will I affirm, that He learned not His* Wisdom, *no more then He did His* stature; *and so if none taught Him, then must it needs follow that He was without* Humane Learning: *for, we in common speech call them* unlearned, *which was never taught, as did the* (*n*) *Jews*; *And* Learning *presupposeth one to Teach, so that* (*me thinks*) *it is but requisite, if any did so affirm, that they should declare His Teacher; which if they cannot do, why then should they affirm Him to have* Hu-

(*m*) Rom. 11. 34, 35.

(*n*) Joh. 7. 15. Act. 4. 13.

mane Learning. *And me thinks, the matter being rightly considered, it will be found* Blasphemy *for any to affirm that He had* Humane Learning, *seeing that in so doing, they call in question the perfection of His* Manhood, *as if there were others that could add unto Him, seeing all grant that the Master is above the Scholler: And the Scripture witnesseth for me,* (o) Luke 2. 46,47. that at (o) twelve years old, *such was his* wisdom *observed amongst the* Doctors, *as that they were* astonished at His understanding and answers; *and doubtless this was part of their great* wonder, *seeing that He never Learned; as it was the* (p) Act. 4. 13. *Councels wonder also concerning* (p) Peter *and* Iohn. *Therefore for any to affirm Him to be by men taught, is to take that glory from Him which He had of his own, and so they are most like to be them that* blaspheme.

3. *It is also very likely that* pride *and* vain glory *will be imputed unto me, as it hath been already, That I, being as I am, should undertake to maintain that which all godly and learned men are contrary to me in.*

I Answer, That it is no strange thing for the Servants of God to meet with such hard measure, even for declaring of the Truth; *for so was* Joseph (q) *dealt by even of his* Father and Brethren: *And so was* (r) David *used for speaking* for the Lord. *And* Paul *you shall finde was* (s) scoffed at by the learned Athenians. *And seeing it hath alwayes been so with God's Servants, why should not I affirm with the Apostle* (t) not to passe to be judged of men, *whatsoever they be, though godly, wise, learned; seeing that as the Apostle saith,* It makes no matter to me, God is no (u) accepter of persons:

(q) Gen. 37 8. 10, 11.

(r) 1 Sam. 17. 28.

(s) Act. 17. 18.

(t) 1 Cor. 4. 3.

(u) Gal. 2. 6.

sons: *And therefore I hold it a defence sufficient with* David *to say,* (x) Is there not a cause? seeing that there is none, that I know of, that will stand up for the Lord, against those that defie the Host of *Israel,* because that they be not *Goliah*-like, men of stature, having boots of brass, and such like furniture, as that the fleshly hearts of men dare not look such in the face, and all because that they be so strongly furnished with man's strength: *Though that the Souldiers of the* Lord of Hosts *may with one blast of a* Rams horn, *through the might of* God, (y) *blow down the strong Wall of this spiritual* Jericho: *seeing that the* Lord *hath said,* That by the (z) mouth of babes and sucklings He will perfect His praise; *and this if Babes should neglect to do,* the stones would cry: *whence it is to be observed, our Saviour descends from*

(x) 1 Sam. 17. 29.

(y) Josh. 6. 20.

(z) Matth. 21. 16.

from Babes to Stones, and not from Babes to Learned men, for He hath choſen ſuch to bring forth His Righteouſneſs as the light; *for He himſelf doth not* deſpiſe the day of (*a*) ſmall things. *Now theſe things conſidered, why ſhould any with the proud* (*b*) Phariſees, *diſdain at what the* Lord *will do, but lay their hands upon their mouths and ſay nothing, becauſe* He (*c*) doth it; *And ſeeing it is the* Lord's (*d*) doing, why ſhould it not be marvellous in our eyes: *Though I doubt not but the* Lord *will in his good time bring forth one* learned Moſes, *and another as excellent that wayes as was* Paul, *and cauſe them diſclaiming that Humane excellency, to magnifie the fooliſhneſs of God,* (*e*) *to be wiſer then the wiſdom of men, and ſo every way convince them of their folly this way to his praiſe.*

(*a*) Zach. 4. 10.

(*b*) Matth. 21. 15.

(*c*) Pſalm, 39.

(*d*) Pſalm, 118. 23.

(*e*) 1 Cor. 1. 25.

And in the mean while let them that can receive

receive this for Truth, receive it, and let none be ſo conceited of Learned men, as if the Word of God came only to them, and from them, *as* Paul *ſaid to* (*f*) *ſome that were puffed up. But let ſuch as are ſpiritual know, that the Lord reveales his Myſteries to whom he pleaſeth, and where he will; and therefore* the eye of none ſhould be evil, becauſe he is good, *but we ſhould learn, as the Wiſe-man ſaith,* that *g* the race is not alway to the ſwift, nor the battel to the ſtrong; *but it may ſo prove, that* little David *without* Saul's *Armour, only with a ſling and a ſtone, through the Name of the Lord, may ſo wound* great Goliah *of* Gath, *the enemy of* God *and his People, as that he may receive his deadly wound, and lye groveling on the ground, to the diſmayment of all the Hoſt of the* Philiſtims, *and great rejoycing of the* Iſrael of God: *and this the*

(*f*) 1 Cor. 14. 36, 37.

(*g*) Eccleſ. 9. 11.

the Stone that is hewen out of the Mountain without hands, is onely able to do. Therefore let all that fear the Lord take heed that they lean not to their own wisdom; but so much the more that any of us have Wisdom, Understanding, Memory, and such like natural parts above others, so much the more let us be watchful and careful over our selves, as knowing that the (*h*) wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God, *and is ready to butt against the Spirit. And now to draw to a conclusion of all in the words of the Prophet,* (*i*) The Lord frustrateth the tokens of the Liars, and maketh Diviners mad, turneth wise-men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolishness.

(*h*) Rom. 8. 7.

(*i*) Esay, 44. 25.

If any shall except against the matter, for the rudeness of it, as that it is without form or learning; all such are to know that it is but sutable to the whole Argu-

ment, and that if it should be otherwise, I should condemn that in practice, which I justifie in words, and so make my self a trespasser. Thus I do commit this my labour, with all those that out of love to the Truth shall seek information in this matter, to the blessing of the most High, and remain an unfeigned wel-willer of all them that love the Lord Iesus *in sincerity.*

The 25th day of the first moneth, 1639.

The

The SUFFICIENCY of THE SPIRIT'S TEACHING Without HUMANE LEARNING.

The Text, 2 PETER, 3. 16.

As one that in all his Epiſtles ſpeaks of theſe things, in which are ſome things hard to be underſtood: which they that are unlearned and unſtable, wreſt, as they do alſo the other Scriptures, unto their own deſtruction.

THeſe words, that I am allotted to ſpeak from at this time, have a reſpect, as it ſhould ſeem, to ſuch things as the Apoſtle had ſpoken of before; which things ſeem to me, to be thoſe that are contained, from the beginning of the ſecond Chapter, to the end of the 13 verſe of this third Chapter: and the 14 verſ. contains *Peters* exhortation, ſtrengthened in the 15 verſ. by his brother *Pauls* Writings, who in all his Epiſtles ſpeaks of theſe things; as of the *coming of the Lord Jeſus*, and other things, ſuch as are herein contained: among the which (that is, *Pauls* Writings in his Epiſtles) ſome things were hard to be *underſtood*: and ſo indeed was the *coming of Chriſt Jeſus*, which it ſhould ſeem was hard of them to be *underſtood*: and that appears by his earneſt writing to the (*a*) *Theſſalonians*; where he exhorts them, *that they ſhould not ſuddenly be moved, neither by Word, nor Epiſtle, as it were from him, as if the day of Chriſt were at hand: for there were many things to be fulfilled firſt*; as a departure from the Faith, the riſing up, the perfection, and the conſumption of the *Man of Sin*: And this it ſhould ſeem, though he had told them of it before, yet to them it was hard to be underſtood, which had the true Learning here meant; which things they that were *Unlearned and Unſtable, perverted,*

(*a*) 2 Theſ. 2. at the beginning.

as they did the other Scriptures, unto their own deſtruction. Therefore the great thing here to be minded, is, To finde out what this *Learning* is that *Peter* here intends. And ſecondly, who they be that are the *unlearned ones*; and by that we ſhall eaſily find who they be that are the *perverters* of the Scriptures, to their own *deſtruction.*

For this end therefore I will conſider what this *learning is not*, and then, what *it is.*

What learning it is not. *It is not Humane Learning.* That I may not be miſ-conceived about it, I will here lay down my underſtanding in it: And by *Humane Learning* I do not mind the knowledge and underſtanding of our own Language, which every man of what Tongue ſoever he be, might in ſome meaſure be taught of another, as the Parents teach their Children, and they learn of them: of this there is a natural ne-
Rom. 10.14 ceſſity, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *How ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* Now the hearing there mentioned muſt needs be a natural hearing, ſeeing it is ſet before Faith; and this hearing muſt needs be the underſtanding of the ſound of words ſpoken. Now thus *Peter* and *John*, and all the reſt learned the fooliſh things ſpoken of, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. and thus I acknowledge that there is none but in ſome meaſure have this *learning*, and muſt of neceſſity have it, to underſtand God's mind in an ordinary way. But by *Humane Learning* all along in this matter, which I oppoſe, It is the knowledge of Arts and Sciences, divers Tongues, and much reading, and a perſiſting in theſe things, ſo as thereby to be made able to underſtand *the mind of God in his Word*: this is it that I condemn from the word of Truth, for being that by which any is made able ſpiritually to underſtand *the mind of God*, which the Apoſtle ſaith, cannot be attained to by *the Words which mans wiſdom teacheth:* all which,
1 Cor. 2. 13. theſe excellencies are ſaid to be. So that by *Humane Learning* I do here underſtand, that, whereby certain men do excel, and are far above and beyond other ordinary men: and in this ſenſe do I under-
Act. 4. 13. ſtand that the Council judged *Peter* and *John* to be *no ſuch learned men*: For, we in common ſpeech do oppoſe a learned man to one that otherwiſe can read and write in his own Tongue, though he do not underſtand the grounds of his own ſpeech, as the other man that is learned doth; as may appear by the Book called the *Engliſh-Schoolmaſter.* And ſo ſuch *learning* do I not conceive to be here meant, which I conclude for theſe Reaſons.

1. Becauſe

1. Becauſe that then *Peter* muſt of neceſſity condemn himſelf, for he was a man that in the (*b*) Councils knowledge was ſuch an *unlearned man*, and ſo muſt needs himſelf lye under that blame that he layes upon others; therefore *Humane Learning* is not here that which he intends. 1 *Reaſon.* (*b*) Acts 4. 13

2. Becauſe *Humane Learning* is a (*c*) *rudiment* of this world: Hence it is that our Saviour acknowledgeth, that his Myſteries *were hid from the* (*d*) *Learned*: but they were not hid from his Diſciples, *for unto them it was* (*e*) *given to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom. And the rudiments of this world are not after Chriſt*, the Apoſtle tels us: therefore *Humane Learning* cannot be it that *Peter* here mindes. 2 *Reaſon.* (*c*) Col. 2. 8. (*d*) Luk. 10. 21. (*e*) Mat. 13. Col. 2. 8.

3. Becauſe *the natural man cannot* (*f*) *perceive the things of God*; but a meer natural man, may be a great worldly learned man, as were the Ægyptians, and Babylonians, and as are many of the Romiſh Prieſts and Jeſuits: therefore for this cauſe, that is not the *learning* here meant. 3 *Reaſon.* (*f*) 1 Cor. 2. 14.

4. Becauſe ſuch of Gods ſervants, as have had ſuch kind of *learning*, when as they came to know *Chriſt*, they forſook it all, as *Moſes* when he came to age, *though he was* (*g*) *learned in all the Wiſdom of the Egyptians, yet by Faith he forſook all the treaſures of* Egypt; and this being one of *Egypts* treaſures, he forſook this alſo: for when he ſaith *treaſures*, there none is excepted: therefore in as much as *Learning* was one, as well as *Riches* and *Honors*, he forſook that alſo; as ſeeing by Faith a better treaſure in the worſt condition among the people of God, then in the beſt condition in the world, ſuppoſe it be *Learning*. 4 *Reaſon.* (*g*) Act. 7. 22.

The like is to be ſeen in *Paul*, *who counted all things loſſe and dung* that he *might win Chriſt*, even the *righteouſneſſe of the Law it ſelf*, which is far beyond all this; and all this he did that he might know Him: Wherein the Apoſtle gives me to underſtand, that all ſuch things were but hinderances to keep him from the *knowledge of Chriſt to Salvation*, which is it that here I mind alſo: Therefore likewiſe this is not the *learning* here meant, ſeeing it was rejected of them, therefore it was no help nor furtherance to them to know *Chriſt* by, but lets and hinderances; and ſo much appears by thoſe Converts in *Act.* 19. 18, 19. who when they believed are ſaid, ſuch of them *as uſed curious Arts, to burn their Books*, declaring that

now they had met with *learning* of far greater worth than their curious Arts, and therefore now they burn their Books, declaring that now they had no more need of them: And so I conclude, that such as this, is not the *learning* here meant.

I now come to manifest what Learning it is the Apostle here intended.

What Learning it is.

Col. 2. 7.

Eph. 3. 17,18. 1 Pet. 2. 6.

Now the Learning here intended by the Apostle, it is, as I understand, That *sound knowledge*, and *sure information* that every Christian hath in *Jesus Christ*, whereby he is so deeply rooted, and so surely grafted into Him by Faith, as that he abides unmoveably setled in Him, as thereby he abides stable in the sure *knowledge* and *understanding* of the *Word of Christ*; and so much here, me thinks, the Apostle gives us to understand, how that the *unlearned*, they be *unstable*: then on the contrary the *learned* they are *stable*, believing, and being laid on the true Foundation, they shal never be confounded or ashamed. Now, such as these are, that are *learned*, *as the truth is in Jesus*, these may well say to the greatest worldly *learned ones*, as *Philip* said to the Eunuch, *Understandest thou what thou readest?* and not only so, but such may teach them the understanding of the Mysterie, saying, These are taught and instructed by the teachings of the Spirit of God, agreeable to these Scriptures: (*h*) *That it hath not entred into the heart of man to conceive of that which God by his Spirit, which searches the deep things of God, hath revealed unto us.* And this the Apostle further explains, *that as no man knows the things of a man, save the Spirit of a man which is in him: so the things of God knows no man*, no not a worldly learned man, *but by the Spirit of God:* and so he goes on to difference the spirit of the world, from God's Spirit, and shews, that, that is it, wherby the things of God are known, and also manifested to others: so that all the things of God, both for matter and manner, flow from the wisdom of God's Spirit, and not what man's wisdom teacheth, which is, to compare spiritual things and carnal things together; as *Tongues*, and *Arts*, and such like: but God's Spirit teacheth us to compare *spiritual things with spiritual things:* and so he goes on, and declares, that only such that are taught by the Spirit, are capable of true discerning of spirituall things, without being justly condemned of any, as truly having the mind of Christ, rightly and truly knowing the things that are of God. And with this agrees the witness of *John*, (*i*) saying, *These things*

(*h*) 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10.

(*i*) 1 John, 2. 26, 27.

things have I written unto you concerning them that deceive you: whereby it appears they had *Deceivers* about them, and thoſe things were written concerning ſuch: But ſaith the Apoſtle in oppoſition to their *deceivings*, *Ye have received the Anointing of Him that dwels in you*: And this *Anointing* that they had received, doth he oppoſe to their *deceiving*, as being able throughly to teach them ſo, *as that they needed not that any man teach them, ſave as that Anointing taught them*: then ſeeing that that *Anointing* never did teach them ſuch *Tongues* or *Arts*, as were humane, therefore the Saints by the Apoſtle's grant, had not need of any ſuch learning; and yet this *Anointing* taught all truth and obedience in it alſo. And yet further, Our Saviour himſelf concludes this point, (*k*) ſhewing, *that when he hath ſent the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth to them, that then he ſhall lead them into all truth*: Whence I do conclude, that for the Diſciples knowledge of the *Truth* there, was no more neceſſary, according to the *mind* of Him that was *Truth*, but the *Spirit of God* to lead them into *all truth*, without all error, teaching by no *humane means*: the reaſon why, is rendred, becauſe it is ſufficient, and that is becauſe it ſpeaks from the Father; agreeable to that of our Saviour, taken from the Prophet, *That* (*l*) *we ſhall be all taught of God*; and ſo indeed being taught of the Spirit, we are taught of the Father and the Son alſo, which are all one; and ſo our *learning* comes to us, being taught of the Father, Son and Spirit, for all our Inſtructers and Counſellors; and this is all the learning that we need, to know the things that are of God by, agreeable to his will: ſo from theſe words, thus interpreted, the Concluſion comes to this,

(*k*) John 16. 7. *with* 13.

(*l*) Joh. 6. 45.

That ſuch as are taught by the Spirit of God, deſtitute of humane learning, are the learned ones that truly underſtand the Scriptures according to Peter's *minde.* Propoſition.

I ſay, ſuch as are taught by the Spirit, without Humane Learning, are ſuch perſons as rightly underſtand the Word. And this (me thinks) the whole Council of *Jeruſalem*, as wicked as they were, did in effect conclude, (*m*) conſidering *Peter* and *John*, though unlearned men, yet they knew they had been with Jeſus by their boldneſs, and ſo they had nothing to ſay againſt it. And yet, though men ſhould oppoſe it, Chriſt Jeſus our Lord (*n*) juſtifies it, with great thankfulneſs to his Father, *that having hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, he had revealed them to babes*. Now that revealing muſt needs

(*m*) Act. 4. 13, 14.

(*n*) Luk. 10. 21, *to* 24.

needs be by the Spirit, according to that, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. And on this manner is it that our Lord comforteth his Disciples, telling them that *all things were given him of his Father to reveal*, and so in that regard he tels them, that *blessed are the eyes that see that, that they saw*, which was (as the Apostle saith) *God manifested in the flesh*, which many wise-men and Kings desired to see, but could not see it: and so that was now made manifest to them, which before was hid from wise-men and Scribes, and so was at the present also; for few of the wise could attain to the knowledge of Him & his Doctrine, as they did. Now, with this also agrees what our Savior further affirms to the Sadduces, (*o*) who by reason of their wisdom and learning thought to have intangled him, he tels them, *That they erred, not knowing the Scriptures*, for all their great Learning, being distitute of Gods Spirit. Now by these Scriptures, this point being thus confirmed, good Reason also may by God's Word be brought for the further justifying of it. As

(*o*) Mat. 22. 23, 29.

1 *Reason.*

First, Because it is the good pleasure of God to place our *Salvation* in great contempt and enmity to *mans wisdom*: Hence is it that the Apostle saith, that he *preached Christ crucified to the Jews a* (*p*) *stumbling-block*, *and to the Grecians foolishnesse*: for the Jews, we read, in great contempt refused him; when *Pilat* bid them behold their (*q*) King; presently they cry, *Away with him, away with him, crucifie him.* And so when *Pilat* had wrote on the Crosse, that he was King of the Jews, they took it as a great prejudice to them, and therefore wished him to write, *that he said he was King of the Jews.* And so as *Peter* tels them in *Acts* 3. *they denied him, and desired a murderer to be given them*; and to this agreed the Gentiles, for they had their hands also in his death. And we find that when as *Paul* preached him at *Athens*, that then this saying of the Apostle here is made good both of Jews and Gentiles: and indeed they both agree to hang him betwixt heaven and earth, as being in their esteem worthy of neither: And yet even in this *crucified Jesus* lyes contained the *salvation of* (*r*) *all*, both Jews and Gentiles, *that are saved*: and in this despised *Jesus* are all to rejoyce with the (*s*) Apostle to *salvation*: for in him thus dishonourable and unmeet, in man's wisdom, *lye hid all our heavenly* (*t*) *treasures of wisdom, righteousnesse, sanctification and redemption*: *for he is the wisdom of God, and the power of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 24.

(*p*) 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24.

(*q*) John 19. 19 21.

Act. 17. 18, 23.

(*r*) Act. 4. 12.

(*s*) 1 Cor. 2. 2 Gal. 6. 14.

(*t*) Col. 2. 3. 1 Cor. 1. 20.

Another

Another Reason why such as have *Gods Spirit*, destitute of *Humane learning*, come thus to know *Gods mind*, is, *That* (as the (*u*) Apostle declares) *no flesh could rejoyce in Gods presence*: now this learning is but fleshly and carnal. Now the Apostle's advise is, though we had known (*x*) *Christ Jesus* after the flesh, yet now coming to be after *God*, we should henceforth know him so no more: and here is a sufficient Reason, because knowledge is subject to puff us up, as saith the (*y*) Apostle, when as *love*, and the learning of the Spirit, keeps us low in our own eyes, and causeth, as *Solomon* saith, our minds to be good, making us sutable to the Apostles Exhortations, (*z*) saying, *Be not high-minded, but make your selves equal to them of the lower sort*; be not wise in your selves, but (*a*) *let every man esteem others better then himself*: and *if any glory, let him* (*b*) *glory in the Lord*. Now he that hath these things, as Humane Learning and Wisdom more then another, let him weigh and consider duly with himself, whether he doth not think and conclude, that he, in regard of these things is not more to be respected, then they that are without them: now then (*c*) this rejoycing is not good, for it is a rejoycing in the flesh, and sutable to (*d*) *Works*, and so not of God: and yet so it is that for our hearts we cannot but think better of our selves for these things, then of others without them; and so we may see the Apostle's words fulfilled, *That the wisdom of the* (*e*) *flesh*, that is, whatsoever the flesh is excellent in, it is *enmity to God*, it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.

2 *Reason.*

(*u*) 1 Cor. 1. 29.

(*x*) 2 Cor. 5. 16.

(*y*) 1 Cor. 2. 8.

(*z*) Rom. 12. 16.

(*a*) Phil. 2. 3.

(*b*) 1 Cor. 1. 31.

(*c*) 1 Cor. 5. 6.

(*d*) Rom. 4. 2.

(*e*) Rom. 8. 7.

Another Cause, why the *Spirits teaching is sufficient without Humane learning*, is, Because (as the Apostle saith) *we are compleat in Him*, that is, perfect and full in Him: and this he strengthens yet further from this consideration, that he is the Head of all Principalities and Powers; so that if there were any thing else to make us compleat, he being the Head of all, we should have it: but he hath given nothing but his (*f*) *Spirit to profit withall*, therefore we are compleat by it alone; and therefore is it that *Paul* (*g*) exhorts *Timothy*, to keep that which was committed to him, which was the Faith taught by the Word and Spirit, and wisheth him to avoid and beware of *Science*, that is, all knowledge natural, which is comprehended under (*h*) *Philosophie*, learned, prophane bablings, and oppositions to the *Faith of Christ*; and so much is by the Apostle there declared, saying, *Which while some have lusted after, they have*

3 *Reason.*

(*f*) 1 Cor. 12. 7.

(*g*) 1 Tim. 6. 20, 21.

(*h*) Col. 2. 8.

erred from the Faith: ſo that it is moſt plain and clear, that theſe things are ſo far from perfecting men, or helping them in the knowledge of the Truth, as that they hinder, and cauſe ſuch as profeſſe them to erre from the Faith; even all the ſeven Liberal Sciences, for all be but *Science*; and all this Science or knowledge, is falſly ſaid to be of uſe in the Goſpel; prophane and vain bablings are far better names for them, and oppoſitions, according to *Pauls* teaching, and he ſaith of himſelf, *I think I have the Spirit of God*; and ſo indeed he had without doubt, and ſo our ground remains good, *that We are compleat in Chriſt Jeſus.*

4 *Reaſon.* (*i*) 1 Cor. 3. 18.

Another Conſideration confirming this Concluſion, is from the Apoſtle's (*i*) advice, *Let no man deceive himſelf*, and that in the true way of attaining *Wiſdom*; he declares what it is in theſe words, *That ſuch a one is to become a fool, that he may be wiſe*; and how is that, but by knowing that indeed there is nothing in all man's wiſdom to be any whit helpful but hurtful to him in attaining and comprehending the *Wiſdom of God in Chriſt*: Now what is more fooliſh to a man, then to know that there is nothing that all the wits of man can reach unto, that can benefit him: and if nothing, then not the thing in queſtion, but that it muſt needs be, that we muſt be fools to it; and what is the true mark of a fool, but to be ignorant, and without knowledge? therefore we call them fools in the world: and ſo is it here; The beſt way for a man to undeceive himſelf, is, to know nothing of this *Learning*, nor any other fleſhly excellency, that ſo he may learn true *wiſdom*. And the Apoſtle doth (me thinks) ſufficiently confirm this advice of his, againſt all exceptions, *The Lord knows* (ſaith he) *that the thoughts of men be vain*: Men think highly of their own conceits this way, yet if no man will take this his counſel for *wiſdom* in this kind, yet the Lord concludes the truth of it, and he knows the *thoughts of men to be vain*, that think *Humane learning* ſome help: But let them think what they will, the Lord is againſt them in it, for he knows that it is ſure that they are deceived; *for his thoughts be not as mans thoughts.*

5 *Reaſon.* (*k*) 1 Cor. 1. 17, 18.

Now another Cauſe that confirms me in this Concluſion, is, Becauſe that whereſoever the Apoſtle honours the *Spirit's-Teaching*, and prefers it, uſually he at the ſame time caſts contempt upon this *Learning*, as it is to be ſeen in many places: (*k*) *Chriſt* (ſaith he) *ſent me to preach the Goſpel, not with wiſdom of words, leſt I ſhould make the Croſſe of Chriſt*, or, *the Goſpel of Chriſt, of none effect*: Where

Where we see, that for good reason he rejects the very wisdom of words in preaching of the Gospel, and that is, lest, if he should have done otherwise, he should have made it of no effect; because he was to declare the *sincere word*, without the least mingling; As if he should say, Such manner of preaching is a foolish preaching, but it is so only *to them that perish; but to such as are saved, it is the power of God*, without what man expects: and therefore he saith again, (*l*) *he was jealous over them with a godly jealousie*, for he had prepared them a *pure Virgin for Christ*: but saith he, *I fear that as the Serpent beguiled* Eve (but how?) *through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupt*, that is, putrified and infected, from the *sincerity* that is in *Christ*: This we see was *Paul's* fear, that while he was absent, their minds should be withdrawn from the foolishnesse of the Gospel, and the simplicity, sincerity, and truth thereof, and this they should be withdrawn from by the subtilty of Satan that old Serpent, in his Instruments the false-teachers; this he fears, because of the fleshlinesse that was in them, which was ready to yeild to their wiles by reason of their subtilty that way; for by fair words and flatteries they deceived the (*m*) *hearts* of the simple, and with this their craftinesse they lye in wait to (*n*) *deceive*: thus contemptuously doth *Paul* speak of these things, in opposition to the true *Learning*, as is further to be seen in many places, of which I will name one more, and that from the Apostle *Peter*, in his second Epistle, chap. 1. vers. 16. *For we* (saith he) *followed not d ceivable Fables, when we opened unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus*. Now such names as these are doth the Apostle choose to cast on mans excellencies, as in divers other (*o*) places, which declare what contempt is cast on such Learning in opposition to the Spirit of God.

(*l*) 2 Cor. 11. 2, 3.

(*m*) Rom. 16. 18.

(*n*) Eph. 4. 14.

(*o*) 1 Tim. 1. 4. and 4. 7. Tit. 3. 9.

Now one thing more which I conceive observable for the proof of this point in hand, is drawn from 2 *Cor.* 2. 10. *The Spirit searches the deep things of God*: and vers. 14. *The spiritual man discerns all things*. If then the Spirit searcheth the deep things of God, and that discerns all things, what need we more. And with this agrees the Apostle *John*, saying, (*p*) *And ye need not that any man teach you, save as that Anointing teacheth you*. Then I conclude, That we need not that any man teach us, not the Master, nor any of his followers, for the Disciples of Jesus Christ do learn, as the truth is in him, and of him, and they have received the Spirit of God, that

5 *Reason*

(*p*) 1 John 2. 27.

they might know the things of God: Therefore we may well be without any mans *learning*, and have no need of it: and so the point is clear and plain, *That such as are taught by Gods Spirit Without that Learning, do truly understand the Word.*

I judge it necessary also to be understood of the Reader, what I do understand by *Humane Wisdom*, as well as *Humane Learning*: By *Humane Wisdom*, I do understand whatsoever appears excellent in mans understanding, as he is left without *Gods Spirit's teaching*; This, the more excellent it is to him that is *carnal*, so much the worse it is: therefore it is said of such by the Apostle, *that When as they professed themselves to be Wise, then they became fools.* And saith our Saviour, *If the light which is in thee* (which I mind to be meant of *mens understanding* and *Wisdom*) *be darkness, how great is that darkness?* So that by *mans Wisdom* I understand, *whatsoever seems excellent to him With which he Would honour God withal, that he is not the Author of*, as *Eloquence* and *fair Speeches*, and any thing in that way; such as the Greeks sought after, as men do now adayes. This I do the rather differ from *Humane Learning*, because it seems to me that the *Scripture* differenceth them, *Acts*, 22. and the difference rightly understood may prevent just exception, and give light to the right understanding of the whole matter: for this *wisdom* is made by the Apostle, and that rightly, *to be enmity to the Spirit of God*, and impossible to submit to it, it is so contrary.

Rom. 1. 21. Mat. 6. 23.

1 Cor. 1. 22.

Rom. 6. 7.

Now follows to be answered such Objections as are made against it. As first,

1 *Object.* That of *Paul*, in 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. *That a Bishop must be no young Scholler, lest he being puffed up, fall into the condemnation of the Devil.*

Answer. The Schollership *Paul* means here, *is the teaching of the Spirit, whereby the man is made sound in the Faith*; for that learning only wil make men low in their own eyes, as is before declared: and he that is *unsound* in the *faith*, will ever be found the most *lofty* and puffed up in his own conceipt, and so be rejected of God, as the Devil was; though he was in Heaven with God, yet being *puffed up*, he was rejected of God, and so (*q*) *cast down to Hell*: to which example *Paul* here alludes, as I conceive, and that rightly; for a Bishop in the Church is in respect of his *spiritual state* and *place*, in *favour and fellowship with God, and that in Heaven*, as the whole Book of the *Revelation* describes the Church to be: Now such as by the Church should

(*q*) 2 Pet. 2. 4.

ſhould be choſen to that *ſtate*, being *young Schollers*, that is, *not ſoundly taught in the Truth by the Spirit*, he is in great danger, the more other *learning* that he hath, ſo much the more to be *puffed up*. This, I believe, was the cauſe of *Diotrephe's* (*r*) *pride*, he wanted this Schollerſhip, and that cauſed him to ſeek the preheminence. And this, whatſoever our great Schollers think of themſelves, is the cauſe of the *high conceits* that they have of themſelves, and their *knowledge* and *underſtanding* above others, that want their *learning*, even this, becauſe they be but young Schollers (if that) in the School of Chriſt: and thence is it they are ſo puft up with the vain glory of their fleſhly learning, that they think none, that are not as themſelves, are fit to be their fellows, and ſo know not how *that they be wretched, poor, miſerable, blind and naked*; though they conceive themſelves *to be rich, and have need of nothing*, as did the (*ſ*) *Laodiceans*; and ſo indeed are *fallen into the condemnation of the Devil*, as being rejected of God; *for he reſiſts the proud, and ſuch as are puft up, and giveth grace to the* (*t*) *humble, and ſuch as are low in their own eyes*. Now whether theſe men *humanely learned*, be they *that are puft up*, or *low in their own eyes*, as mean as he that is *unlearned*, I leave to all that have eyes to ſee to look into it, and ſo to judge whether they are not yet to learn *Pauls* Schollerſhip.

(*r*) 3 John 9. 10.

(*ſ*) Rev. 3. 17

(*t*) 1 Pet. 5. 5.

Further, I ſay, it is here to be minded, That if it ſhould be *Humane Learning* that is here meant, then *Paul* ſhould teach *Timothy* for to teach the Church to chooſe ſuch Schollers as had more *learning* then had their Maſter Chriſt Jeſus: Now this ſome ſay is *Blaſphemy*, and threaten me ſorely for it.

I anſwer them, That conſidering Chriſt Jeſus as God, according to the Divine-Nature, ſo he *is God over all, and ſo gives all things*, *Act.* 17. 25. and ſo he is (*u*) *the giver of every good gift*, and ſo *Humane Learning* and *Wiſdom* are (*x*) *of him*: and ſo much (but that men are maliciouſly bent) they might diſcern, that I in this *Argument* had not to deal with him, as *God*, but as the *Miniſter of God, adminiſtring for the good of his Body*, according to that, *Luke* 24. 18. where he ſaith, *The Spirit of the Lord hath anointed me, that I ſhould miniſter, &c.* And ſo in this Argument he is by the Apoſtle ſet forth as a Man, (*y*) *Jeſus of Nazerah, a man approved of God*; and ſuch a man, ſo adminiſtring, I do ſtill affirm, and that with great confidence, that He was *unlearned* in this conſideration, and without the Learning that we ſpake of. And ſo the *tongue of*

Anſwer.

(*u*) Jam. 1. 17.

(*x*) Rom. 11. 37.

(*y*) Act. 2. 22.

(z) Isa. 5. 1. (a) Isa. 61. 1. *the* (z) *Learned* that was said to be given Him, is interpreted by the same Prophet (a) to be the *Spirit of God*; for, saith he, *The Spirit of the Lord hath anointed Me, that I should preach*: from whence is plain, *That Christ Jesus was learned of the Father to preach by the Spirit, without Humane Learning*, and so much is plain to them that can believe the Scriptures, from *Joh* 7. 15. where the Jews admire, saying, *How comes this man to know the Scriptures, seeing that he was never learned?* From whence it is plain, that as he was a Man he was *unlearned in the letters of the Scriptures*, though as God he knew all things, and by a *Divine Power*, not *Humane Learning*, so much as his own natural tongue by letter, as in the Synagogue he could take the Book and read: and this doubtlesse was one cause, why the Jews are said to be astonished at the hearing and seeing of Him, as appears, *Matth.* 13. 54. &c. *Luk.* 4. 22. So that from all this my affirmation remains true, and good, *That if Humane Learning should be it that is there meant by the Apostle, then he was to teach the Servant to be above his Master*, when as Christ Jesus himself saith, (b) *It is enough for the Disciple to be as his Lord*: and He being *destitute* of *Humane Learning*, His Disciples may well be without it also, without any offence, and yet preach the Gospel too. Now, if notwithstanding all this, there be them that will take *Stephen's Accusers* place, (c) and still accuse me of *Blasphemy* as they did him, &c. though it may be, they may say true words, as that I said that *Jesus Christ was without Humane Learning*, and so apply it to him as God, when as I spake of him as Man, they may there see themselves ranked among the number of them that are called by the Spirit of God, *false Witnesses*, as walking in the steps of those envious persons, even such as were alwayes the *murderers* and *betrayers* of *Jesus Christ* and his *servants*: and they that are such, may be likened to them that being full of *envie*, (d) *spake against those things that were spoken of* Paul, *contrarying them, and railing on them*: Mark it, they denyed what he taught, but disproved it not, but spake against it, and railed on the person, and so left not till they had been a means to expel them out of their Coasts: so was he: And such like measure is still to be expected to befall such as tread in his steps; but it is to be minded, that envious ones are the movers of it. And so leaving of it, I come to another Exception, which is:

See further of this in the Epistle, noted with ( )

Luke 4. 7.

(b) Mat. 10. 5

(c) Acts 6. 11.

(d) Acts 13. 45.

2 *Object.* *How such as are* unlearned, *will be able to stop the mouths of Gainsayers,*

sayers, seeing the Apostle requires of a (e) *Bishop, that he should be able so to do?* (e) Tit. 1. 11

Answer. I answer, That it is not the Apostles intent, that the mouthes of Gainsayers should be stopped by the knowledge of Tongues and Arts, but that way that himself directs, 1 *Titus* 9. which is *by sound doctrine*, or by *wholsom doctrine*; so then, to go to any other way then thus to stop their mouthes, is both an unsound and unwholsom course: and it were far better in my judgment, and that according to *Paul*, *that their mouths should be left open*, then that they should be *stopt after that manner*, and that it hath not profited them in the spiritual meaning of the Word that have been exercised therein: so now it is high time that we, honouring the *Teaching of the Spirit*, should refuse to meddle with such as go another way to work, then by *It*, to declare Gods mind to us, because *It* alone is sufficient to *stop the mouths of all Gainsayers.* (f) *They were not able to resist the Spirit* (not Tongues and Arts) *by which he spake*, for he used none of them; *for the Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal*, and so are Tongues and Arts, and such like, *but yet mighty*, not by man, but *through God, to* (g) *cast down strong holds*: therefore this *weapon* only is *sufficient to stop the mouth of all gainsayers*: and for such as think it not *sufficient*, much good let their *Humane Learning* do them, and *the good Lord give me of his holy Spirit only, to do this work*: And so I come to the next Exception, which is, (f) Acts 6. 10. (g) 2 Cor. 10. 4.

3 *Object.* *That there was the use of Tongues in the Apostles times in the Churches*, Acts 2. Acts 8. Acts 10. Acts 19. 1 Cor. 12. *and* 1 Cor. 14.

Answer This I grant was true, but there we find that they were the *immediate gifts of God*, freely given and bestowed on them as other *spiritual gifts* were, without their *industry* or *pains*, as appears in divers (h) Scriptures: Now whersoever such *gifts* are to be found, them will I freely acknowledge, as being indeed sutable to the Gospel, which brings to us freely all good *gifts*, without any labour or pains of ours, and therefore all is said *to be of gift, lest any man should boast*: but if the *Tongues* that are pleaded for, are such as are attained to by *industry* and *pains taking* of our own, then they better suit with *works* then *grace*, and so are more meet for *Egypt* and *Babylon* then for the *Church of Jesus Christ*, which comes by all her precious Gifts *gratis*; and therefore such as plead for these things, as sutable to the Ministers, become in effect sutable with *Si-* (h) Acts 2. 2. 8. 27 10. 44 19. 6.

mon

(i) Act. 8. 18. mon (i) *Magus*, who would have purchased the *gift of the Spirit, by money*, which there was the *gift of tongues*; and if these *tongues* pleaded for, be the same, they are all attained by *money*: and if this be so good a way now, why doth *Peter* so evilly intreat him, for desiring that for *money*, which all afterwards, by these Pleas, were thereby to obtain: But *Peter*, we see, perceives him to be in the *gall of bitternesse, and the bond of iniquity*, that should offer to seek to obtain the gift of Gods Spirit that way: and if they be *Humane Excellencies*, then of necessity the course is to be repented of also, that any should offer to bring any *humane thing* to *Gods Word*, when as it is so expresly forbidden us, *that we put nothing thereto, nor take*

Deut. 12. 32. Prov. 30. 6. *any thing therefrom. Put nothing to his Word, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.* Now there is nothing but the *Word* and *Spirit* go together, therefore they are lyable to Gods reproof, which

(k) Psal. 50. 21, 22. is (k) *tearing in pieces.* Therefore let all such as stand for such Learning to bring men to the knowledge of Gods Word, mind whether *Peters* exhortation to *Simon Magus* ought not to take place

(l) Act. 8. 22. with them, namely, to (l) *repent of this their wickeanes, &c.* and acknowledge the *Spirit of God freely bestowed, to be the alone furnisher of us to that which is right in his sight*: without which none have part or fellowship of this businesse in understanding and unfolding of the things of God; And so I come to another Exception:

4 *Object.* *Suppose two men, both alike endued with* grace from God, *and alike gifted by* His Spirit, *the one a Learned man, the other an Unlearned man, which of these two should be chosen into the Ministerie of Christ in his Church?*

Answer *The Unlearned man:* For these Reasons.

(m) Gal. 2. 6. First, Because (m) *God respects no mans person.* Now if God should take the Learned man, then he must be respected above the other for it, if he be of right and due to be preferred, which is wickedness once to think of him, for all are alike in that respect: but the Scripture tels us, and that for good reason, *That without any respect at all, be of his good pleasure, and that no flesh should glory,*

(n) 1 Cor. 1. 27. *hath chosen the foolish things and the vile things in mans account: He hath chosen the* (n) *foolish things of this world to confound the wise*: Then if God have so *chosen*, let him have his own *choice*, it is meet he should, for his *choice is the best*; and the end why he hath

(o) Isa. 29 13. (p) 1 Cor. 1. 19. so chosen, is, *that he might confound the wise*, and so (o) *fulfil his Word*, as *Paul* (p) expresseth; and thus he chooseth not only for Salvation

Salvation, but for Miniſtration, the (q) *fooliſh* in Man's account. *Paul*, it ſeems, was ſo fooliſh in theirs and others account in his adminiſtration of the *Word*, as that they could ſcarce ſuffer it; and this ſenſe muſt needs be good, though the place be underſtood of *Gods voice to ſalvation only*, which cannot be the meaning; becauſe, as we may ſee, *Pauls* argument about (r) *preaching the Goſpel*, going onwards in oppoſing the Scribe and Diſputer of this World, to them that were not ſuch, and ſo comes to declare among whom it was that the Lord made his choice, and that was among the fooliſh in the Worlds eyes: but, as I ſaid before, take the other for the ſenſe, and the point remains true; becauſe, *That of ſuch as God chooſeth to ſalvation, of them he chooſeth Miniſters; and for ſalvation, it is granted, he chooſeth the fooliſh:* then it muſt needs follow, *that out of the fooliſh alſo he chooſeth Miniſters.*

(q) 1 Cor. 4. 10. 2 Cor. 11. 1.

(r) 2 Cor. 11. 17.

Secondly, And this indeed is moſt ſutable to the Goſpel, which is it ſelf (ſ) *ſimplicity*, and appears to the wiſdom of man ſo to be; And it is not meet, our Saviour ſaith, to put *contraries* together; *as a new piece into an old garment, nor new Wine into old veſſels*, but to have all things ſutable. Therefore ſeeing the Goſpel is (t) *fooliſhneſſe*, therefore it is meet he ſhould have *fooliſh Miniſters* in the *Wiſe Worlds account*; yea, and in his ſervants too, when as *they ſee as man ſees, and not as doth the Lord*: For thus was it of old ſubject to *Samuel* the Lords Prophet, when as the Lord ſent him to the houſe of *Iſhay*, to anoint him a King, he *ſeeing as a man doth*, he ſaid, (u) *Surely the Lords Anointed is before me*: But we find that the Lord corrects that, and tels him, it was not ſo, *The more unlikely man, and the unthought-of-one, Was he that God had choſen to himſelf*: and ſo is it here, *We are not to ſee as man ſees*, but *as the Lord directs us.*

(ſ) 2 Cor. 1. 3.

(t) 1 Cor. 1. 25.

(u) 1 Sam. 16. 6, 7.

Thirdly, *God chooſeth theſe things in oppoſition to others, to aſtoniſh the Wiſdom of man:* When the (x) *Council* perceived *Peter* and *John* were *unlearned men*, and *without knowledge*, they *marvelled*, and were *amazed*. And ſo ſaith the Apoſtle, (y) *He catcheth the Wiſe in their own craft:* they think that all knowledge lyes in their breaſts. Now the Lord he comes and makes fools wiſe, and ſo catcheth them, manifeſting *that their thoughts be but vain, in thinking that the Wiſe be them that God hath choſen*; for it is not ſo, *for he hath choſen the fooliſh to confound the Wiſe*: and therefore ſuch as are godly wiſe, ſhould chooſe Gods wiſe, but the worlds fooliſh

(x) Act. 4. 13.

(y) 1 Cor. 3. 19

things; for His ſerve before the worlds wiſe ones. And ſo I come to another Exception; which is,

5 Object. *If it be* ſanctified, *it muſt needs be a good help to the right underſtanding of the Truth.*

Anſwer. It is true, if it be *ſanctified*, ſo it is: But how, or where doth that appear that ever it was *ſanctified*? Hath not the Lord long agone told us by his (z) Prophet, and wiſhed his to behold it, *That he would do a marvellous work*; and then he doubles it again, *even a marvellous work and a wonder*; and then all comes to this, *That he would cauſe to periſh, and deſtroy the Wiſdom of the Wiſe, and caſt away the underſtanding of the Prudent*: And here, if we could ſee, we might all of us ſtay our wondring at this ſtrange thing, and conſider, the Lord tels us, *It is a marvellous work and a wonder*: and ſo our wondring and marvelling how theſe things come ſo to be, is but a fulfilling of Gods Word; and men might reſt in it, and ſee in the next words, *that it is a wo to them for the former abuſe of the ſame.*

(z) Iſa. 19. 15.

(a) Mal. 2. 2. And ſo now, as (a) *Malachy* ſaith, *That he would curſe their bleſſings, and that he had done it already*: To both which agrees (b) the Apoſtle from *Iſaiah*, and concludes alſo, *that God hath deſtroyed it*: and in another place tels us, *that it is enmity with God.* How ſhall any dare to ſay then, *it is ſanctified*, when as ſo plain a *curſe* is on it, as that we are wiſhed to beware of being (c) *ſpoiled by it*: Now, are we wiſhed any where to beware of being ſpoiled by that which is *ſanctified to us in a ſpiritual way*? Now theſe things can be ſanctified no further then they are of uſe, and that is but in a worldly way: for a *ſpiritual uſe* they be accurſed from it.

(b) 1 Cor. 1. 19. Rom. 8. 7.

(c) Col. 2. 8.

6 Object. Now another Exception from theſe things thus minded, is, *That by this all* Humane Learning *ſeems utterly to be condemned.*

Anſwer. I anſwer, That it follows not, becauſe it is not to be allowed in this way, that therefore it is not of any uſe; for I do acknowledge it in it ſelf to be a good thing, and good in its proper place, which is for the repairing of that (d) *decay which came upon man for ſin*: ſo, I ſay, it is of good uſe for the repairing of that loſſe, and ſo fit for Stateſmen, Phyſitians, Lawyers, and Gentlemen; yea, all men ſo far as they can attain to it, are as men beyond and above others that are without it; yea, and beyond all other excellencies that this world can afford: but bring it once to be a *help to underſtand the mind of God in the holy Scriptures*, and there it is *deteſtable filth, droſſe and dung* in that reſpect, and ſo good for nothing, but (e) *deſtroy*, and cauſe

(d) Gen. 11. from 6, to 10.

(e) 1 Tim. 6. 21.

cauſe men to erre, as we have ſeen before: It fares with it, as I perceive, as it doth with fire, keep it in the chimney, and it ſerves as a good bleſſing of God, for good and neceſſary uſes, but let it once come into the roof of the houſe, and it deſtroys all, becauſe it is not in its proper place: ſo it is here for this thing among men, for humane and worldly imployments it is good; but bring it once to the perfecting of the Goſpel, and it will be found to be the ſpoyling of it.

And yet further, So far do I acknowledge Tongues to be of uſe, as to yeeld us the Tranſlation of the Scriptures, out of one Language into another, without which we that are unlearned, could not come to have the letter of the Word, and ſo far there is a neceſſity of it for that uſe: but that man which can ſo do, is ever the more able to underſtand the ſpiritual meaning of the Word thereby, that I deny, and withall do affirm, That an underſtanding man may, through the teaching of the Spirit, know the mind of God, which the other may never reach unto; according to that ſaying of our Saviour, (*f*) *To you it is given to know the myſteries, the ſecrets of the Kingdom of Heaven*: to you his *ſimple Diſciples* it is given; but to others, the *learned Scribes* and *Phariſees* it was not given: But in this caſe it may fare, as it did with thoſe that built *Noah's* Ark, they made a place of ſafeguard for others, but were drowned themſelves: ſo theſe men may prepare a good help for others, but themſelves be altogether without the benefit of it: A Lanthorn, you know, is of good uſe to contain the Candle, but let one carry it in a dark night and it will do him no pleaſure without a Candle lighted in it: of the ſame uſe is the letter of the Word, it is but as a Lanthorn or Candle without light. Now the Spirit is the light of the letter, and ſo is the Apoſtles (*g*) oppoſition: ſuch men then in that reſpect may be a help to others, and yet when all is done be but caſtaways themſelves, ſeeing, as we have before ſeen, the Egyptians and Babylonians in this kind of learning did excell. And it is none other bleſſing then what the Pope, Cardinals, and other profeſſed enemies of the Truth (as all for the general confeſſe them to be) have in as great a meaſure, and beyond many others that profeſſe to know the Truth, and ſtand ſtifly for this, as a ſpecial help to underſtand the true meaning of the Lord in the Word, which if it be ſo, then by their own grants they have the advantage of them, and ſo are to be reverenced of themſelves to have more knowledge in it then they: ſo then they are to acknowledge their error, in counting themſelves wiſe above what is meet, or

(*f*) Mat. 13. 11.

(*g*) 2 Cor. 3.

elſe muſt be forced to confeſſe, that that Learning is inavailable for finding out of the mind of God. Neither for all this, would I have any to conclude of me, as ſome affirm, That I hold all learned men to be excluded from the ſpiritual meaning of the Word, God forbid; for,

Though the Apoſtle ſaith, (*h*) *Not many of ſeveral ranks*, yet he ſaith not, *there is none*, but yet *not many*: There was one *Joſeph* of (*i*) *Arimathea*, one (*k*) *Nichodemas*, one Deputy (*l*) *Sergius Paulus* a prudent man, and divers of the (*m*) *Prieſts*. But this was not uſual, for it is hard for ſuch men to entertain the Truth. God's ordinary way is among the fooliſh, (*n*) weak and vile, ſo that when as the wiſe, rich, noble and learned, come to receive the Goſpel, they then come to make themſelves equal with them of the (*o*) lower ſort, the *fooliſh*, *vile* and *unlearned*; for thoſe be the true (*p*) heirs of it, and therefore it was not in vain that *James* ſaid (*q*) *Harken my beloved brethren, hath not God choſen the poor*? He well ſaw that the rich and carnal were dull of hearing of this matter, but yet he tels them, *God hath choſen the poor of this world, to be rich in faith*; and upon this conſideration it is that he wiſheth the (*r*) *Brother of high degree to rejoyce in that he was made low*, that is, brought in his mind and account equal with the poor, accounting himſelf never the higher for any ſuch excellencies: and ſo the *Brother of low degree to rejoyce in that he is exalted*, that is, that he was made *a* (*ſ*) *King and Prieſt unto God, and was ſet in heavenly places with Jeſus Chriſt*; ſo, as the one is made low in reſpect of any *fleſhly confidence* he hath in ſuch things, the other is exalted, being *outwardly poor*, by being in *Chriſt Jeſus*, and ſo they both meet in one: But now by reaſon *of the ſmoke that is riſen out of the bottomleſſe Pit*, and *that the Devil is caſt out of Heaven, and all his Angels with him, to the Earth*, which Angels were the *faln* (*u*) *ſtars that he drew after his tail*, that now he hath by reaſon of them hatched ſince a Religion in the World, as that he would have the *Wiſe*, the *Rich*, the *Noble*, the *Learned*, the only ones, and the *Poor* muſt be beholden to them, when as this is like himſelf directly to oppoſe *Jeſus Chriſt*; ſo, as that we may truly ſay with the Prophet, *Lord, who hath believed our report? or, to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed*?

(*b*) 1 Cor. 1. 26.
(*i*) Mark 15. 34.
(*k*) Joh. 3. 1.
Act. 13. 7.
(*l*) Act. 6. 7.
(*m*) 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28.
(*n*) Jam. 2. 5. *with* Mat. 11. 5.
(*o*) Rom. 12. 26.
(*p*) Iſa 61. 1.
(*q*) Jam. 2. 5.
(*r*) Jam. 1. 9, 10.
(*ſ*) Rev. 1. 6.
(*u*) Rev. 9. 1, 2

7 Object. But yet it is further objected, to be the manner of ſuch as cannot themſelves attain to that *excellencie* that is in another, to diſparage that in them, that ſo they might advance themſelves.

Anſwer. This I confeſs is a *carnal courſe*, that ſuch as are themſelves fleſh-

ly

ly are subject to take, and it may as well be my fault as anothers; but yet I professe in the presence of the Lord, that I do not allow my self in any such course. Neither doth such an exception as this beseem a man *that is led by the Spirit of Truth*, for to make against any *servant of God*, that professeth *opposition* to such things, as professing to be led thereto by the *Word* and *Spirit of Truth*; for it savours strongly of the *flesh*, and is too sutable to the *practise of reprobates*, whose practise is to take things in the *evil part*, whereas *love*, by which all the Saints should judge, *judgeth the best of things*, till such time it can espy any cause so to do. And for the *lifting up of my self* to be sure if I so do, Gods Word it is, *that he will pluck the mighty from his seat*, and then you may be sure, that according to his Word, my *fall* will be far greater then my *exaltation* can possibly be; and therefore it were best for all such as so conceive, to *commit the judgment to the Lord*, and themselves *judge nothing before the time, nor speak no more presumptuously: let not arrogancy come out of your mouth, for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him enterprises are established.* But yet after this manner of reasoning, *carnal men* may overthrow the whole Gospel; For whereas the Scripture shews, *that Jesus Christ was without form or beauty*, or any such thing, wherefore he should be desired: The carnal man will soon say no other, But such a one would be so foolish as to part from *honours, riches, credit*, and such like, to endure so much sorrow and need not. And whereas the Apostle saith, (*x*) *That he took on him the form of a servant*: they would soon answer, And good reason why, because he could not be a Master. And whereas it is said, *He chose the poor*: that they will say, he must needs do, and the *foolish*; for none of the *rich* and *wise* would be so simple as to follow him: And whereas he saith, *Love not the world, nor the things in it*: Good cause why they will say, for such fools as you know not how to get it, or else to be sure you would love it as well as others. And thus have I given you a glympse, how that by this manner of carnal arguing, we might overthrow our *own salvation, and sit down in the very vale and shadow of death*, as *full of darkenesse*, as this Argument is *destitute of truth.*

(x) Phil. 2.

And thus having answered to such Exceptions as I know of made against this Truth: I come now to such Uses as it shall afford us.

1 *Use.*

The first is, To discover to us the *depth of the great Wo that the world lyes under*, set forth and revealed (*y*) to us, in which the

(y) Revel. 9. *from* 1, *to* 11.

Word

Word of the Lord is fulfilled, and men see it not: and this you know the Scripture in sundry places makes the *depth of a judgment*, as in *Hosea*, *Ephraim* is said to have here and there *grey hairs*, *and yet he saw them not*. And in this we know was the strength of that *great* (z) *judgment*, *that men should confidently take lies for truth*, this is there made the *depth of their woe*. And the like is manifested *elsewhere, by the same Apostle, declaring, *That though they speak lies, yet they were so seared in their consciences, as that they felt, nor fear'd no danger that they were in*, no more *then the* † *man that lying drunk did, though he lay sleeping on the top of the Mast, and so ready to be drowned, yet he feared it not*: and yet such is the case, the Sun and the Air being *darkened*, their condition must needs be wofnl: And yet this is the case of the inhabitants of the Earth, that they cannot be brought to believe, but that they are in a very good case, though that the *light of the glorious Gospel, which is the Image of God, do not shine unto them*, as (a) saith the Apostle. Now that by which this Sun is said to be darkened, is *the smoke of the bottomlesse pit*, and that we shall find to be the *glory and power of the false Church*, called by the name of the *Bottomlesse-pit*. And that this may the better appear, we find many (b) places in the Scriptures, *manifesting the glory of God, and his power, to be His Smoak*. Now becaus God hath *Smoak in his Temple*, so hath Gods *Adversary in his Temple* also, or rather, his *Bottomlesse-pit*: After his *smoak* in *Rev.* 9. 2, 3. *there follows power*: and if you look in the 7, 8, and 9 Verses, there is *their glory*: And it doth further appear by the 13 Chapt. and 3 Vers. that it was *so great power and glory*, as that *all the World Wondred and admired it*; and yet this *Jesus Christ accounts a great Woe and plague to them*. Now part of this *Woe*, I believe, is this Learning which we have here in question; for, as we have before manifested, *the Sun-light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ allows not*, for the *glory of Christs Doctrine* is, *that it is of the Spirits-teaching*: for when we behold the glory of the Lord in the most perfect measure, so as *We are changed thereinto from glory to glory*, yet all is from the Spirit of the Lord, seeing that he is the promised Comforter, that is to teach us all good things belonging to our perfection. Then it must needs follow, that is a smoakie power and glory, flowing *from the kingdom of Satan, and so a part of the tail that the* (c) *Dragon drew the Stars withal after him*: and hence comes it to passe, that now instead of the *Spirits-teaching*, according to

(z) 2 Thes. 2. 11.

* 1 Tim. 4. 2.

† Pro. 23. 34.

(a) 2 Cor. 4. 4, 6.

(b) Isa. 6. 4 2 King. 8. 11, 12. with 15 Revel. 8, & 9.

Revel. 16. 10, 11

2 Cor. 3. 12

(c) Rev. 12. 4.

Peters

Peters Propheſie, here are a generation that do ariſe, *Which privily bring in damnable errors, and ſo for that end forſaking the Spirit of Truth, they ſpeak lies through hypocriſie*, as *Paul* alſo witneſſeth they ſhould do; pretending now that the true and right way for underſtanding the Scriptures and mind of God was, That men for that end muſt learn a part from others, only for that work, and ſo to be taught in Tongues and divers Languages, and have their wits exerciſed in Arts and Sciences humane: and ſo ſuch a flouriſh bears this in mans conceit, as that it ſeems the only way that can be for a man to be made fit for this work: ſo that before while the Angels kept their ſtation in Heaven, the Spirit's ſimple teaching was judged ſufficient without theſe things for this work; they now being fallen from thence to the *Earth, and having the key of the bottomleſſe pit*, thence it being opened, now ariſeth up (*d*) *Plato* and *Ariſtotle*, and a multitude more of Heathen Philoſophers: Theſe are the *four Angels that ſtand on the four corners of the Earth, holding the four Winds that they ſhould not blow on the Earth, neither on the Sea, neither on any Tree*; as being thoſe that have the whole power of Preaching in their hand, not ſuffering any to blow but who they pleaſe, and ſo *do with-hold the Truth in unrighteouſneſſe, declaring thereby they be under the Wrath of God*: and they ſeem to yeeld theſe ſtarry Principles, very fitting in their own underſtanding, better to furniſh them with *fitneſſe to open the mind of God*, then His *Spirit* can do; whereas before, when as the perfect teachings of the holy Spirit was in force, theſe men of all others were by reaſon of their *Learning* and *Wiſdom*, the moſt un-utterableſt men that were in the world for the receiving of the Truth, as appears by the teſtimony of *Luke*; and yet, for all the great Sun-light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, which theſe men profeſſe, they have theſe black ſmoakie principles ſtill ſo ſtifly ſtood for, as that there is no removing of men from the high conceit that they have of them. And doth not this ſufficiently declare, as the Apoſtle ſaith, That God hath blinded the minds of men, ſo as they cannot ſee, but are ſo much the blinder, becauſe they ſay they ſee: And hence came it to paſſe, that I for mentioning *Plato* and *Ariſtotle*, and ſuch like, was demanded, How I came by the knowledge of that, if not by Humane Learning? with contempt caſt upon it, as if that which I had from them, being Humane Learned Men, was of it ſelf ſufficient to overthrow the matter, which I had there delivered.

2 Pet. 2. 1
1 Tim. 4: 2
Rev. 9. 4
(*d*) *See* John Bale *on* Rev: 9. 1
Rev: 7. 1
Rom. 1. 18
Acts 1. 18
2 Cor. 4. 4
John 9. 41

Object:

Anſwer

I anſwer,

Acts 17 I answered then, as I do still, It was none other, but as *Paul* mentioned to the *Athenians their own Poets*, and yet for all that he was as great an enemy to Humane Learning as I, and greater too. And it is to be minded, as I have before declared, that I do not oppose the knowledge of Humane things, nor yet deny but that we may be acquainted with their sayings, as the Apostle himself, and our Saviour was, yea, and that sometimes we make use of them to, as occasion requires, as I have done here, though sparingly, and but seldom, and when it is, that it be of great use; as it was at those three times that *Paul* did use them, and no more, that I remember in all the Scripture. Now this you see the Spirit teacheth, and therefore it cannot properly be called Humane Learning, especially in my sense, that I have to do withall, which is to oppose that which is maintained to make men fitting to open the mind of God in his Word, which is by the learning of Tongues and Arts, as of necessity, whereas this is used but by the *by*, and not to find out the Truth with, but it being sufficiently before proved by themselves also. It is the Spirits order to gain there acknowledgment of it, and this is no other learning, but what every man without any Scholership (as ye call it) may attain unto; whereas that that is so much gloried in, is, That a man is able aptly to speak according to art and knowledge in the Sciences, and this is it by which men yet still are hatched and bred up; and this, I believe, was the means of bringing in all those abominable Errors that the Earth hath drunk in, both in Doctrine and Practice, and so have occasioned those noisom lusts that drown men in perdition, that the man of God is to flee, as best beseeming the tail of the Dragon, and suting with this *great Wo*, which is further manifested, by comparing the Ministers of Jesus Christ and those together. Now what marks they be known by, you may read in 2 *Cor.* 6. from the third to the 11 vers. where, as in a Looking-glass, you may behold the true Picture both of the one, and of the other: *By them We approve our selves as the Ministers of Christ, and give none occasion Why our Ministry should be reproved*, saith *Paul*, *In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labour, in Watchings, in fastings, by purenesse, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindnesse, by the holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the Word of Truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousnesse, on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet known;*

Acts 17. 28
1 Cor: 15. 33
Tit. 1. 12

Rev: 12. 16
1 Tim: 6, to 12.
Rev. 12 4.

known; as dying, and yet behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, and yet alway rejoicing; as poor, and yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. These ye see are the marks by which *Paul* approves himself, with his fellow-labourers, to be the Ministers of Christ. Now the quite contrary may be read in those that profesſe themselves so to be: They disprove themselves to be the Ministers of Christ, in all these things: *Where is their patient bearing with the contrary minded,* as *Paul* saith, the (*f*) *servants of God* should do? and where are their afflictions which they suffer, with their necessities and distresses? are they not for the most part full of all outward necessaries? What are they in distresse for? How many stripes do they suffer, or shall have need so to do, be they but observant of their Canonical obedience? How many, nay, where are any imprisonments that they suffer, or at least need to do, if they live according to their own Laws? And for tumults they are so far from abiding any, as that they be far more ready to make them against others, then to endure them themselves: And for their labours, which what he means you may perceive by 1 *Cor.* 4. 12. and that to be sure they are guiltless of? And so for their watchings and fastings, and all the rest, being duly considered of, we may read the quite contrary fulfilled in them, so that of necessity there will appear as void a difference, as is betwixt light and darkness, and those persons more fitly suting that description belonging to the (*g*) Locusts, then with this description here of the (*h*) Apostle, so far they are from what they pretend themselves to be, as that the words of the Prophet came truly to be fulfilled in them, *That their* (*i*) *wisdom and their knowledge perverts them,* or *causes them to erre, and is the wickednesse they trust unto:* and this is it that lifts them up in their own conceits so far, as that they think in their hearts, and stick not to say also with their tongues, that They are for the Ministration of the Word, and none else: and the Lord saith, *That their wisdom and knowledge is the cause of this their error*; and they say it is the means of right understanding: now whether is to be believed, God or they, let all judge, especially when as we see, that the Lord himself is against them for it, in denying others he denies them, saying, *Therefore shall evil come upon thee, and thou shalt not know where it ariseth, &c.* all which declares the depth of the wo they lye under; For is not this a woful thing, that of that which God hath made a curse, men should make a blessing, and that

(*f*) 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25.

(*g*) Rev. 9. *from* 7 *to* 11.

(*h*) 2 Cor. 6. *from* 3 *to* 11.

(*i*) Isa. 47. 10.

againſt his will, and ſay that his mind cannot be known; what can be more againſt him?

2 *Uſe.* In the next place: That being ſo, that men taught by Gods Spirit; are through it ſufficiently made able to know his mind in word, then it teacheth us not to account any man any whit the nearer to underſtand the Scriptures by any humane excellencies, but rather let us be ſuſpicious of him that hath them, for the ſame: eſpecially if he make uſe of them in thoſe things; for, as we have ſeen, they be dangerous to be leaned unto. It is high time that now we ſhould all awake from ſleep, and watch in the Spirit, and ſo let the Lord have all the praiſe and glory of his own grace: *Not unto us, Not unto us, but to his Name be all the glory, ſeeing it is he only that doth great things.*

Rom. 11. 19.

Alſo it may teach all men to ceaſe pinning of their faith upon the ſleeves of Learned men, for there is no good cauſe why we ſhould ſo do; but to ſee with our own eyes, ſeeing that the juſt is to live by his own faith, and to believe what the Lord hath ſaid, which is, *that he hath* (k) *hid thoſe things*, that is, the myſteries of the Goſpel (among which, this which now is declared is one) from the wiſe and learned; And this I verily believe, is the wholſom Doctrine of the Goſpel, and which hath againſt it the wiſe and learned, oppoſing and denying of it to be ſo, and ſo confirming the words of our Saviour: therefore need we not to wait for their witneſſe to it, but to be glad and rejoice to ſee his ſaying made true, *That he will reveal them to babes*, that is, ſimple things in the worlds eye and account, and with this conſideration to overlook all contempt that can be caſt upon us for the ſame: For ſo it is now with men, that they judge that nothing is hid from ſuch and ſuch, when as we are to expect the fulfilling of the Prophecy of (l) *Zachery, That the Lord will cut off the names of the Idols, and the unclean ſpirits of the Land; and that while they propheſie, their father and mother, that begat them, ſhall run them through with the ſword of the Spirit, and ſay, they ſhall not live; becauſe they told Lies in the Name of the Lord*, and then they ſhall be *aſhamed of their Viſion*; and it then ſhall be known, that their garments, by which they be known and taken knowledge of to be Miniſters, are *garments of deceit*: and at that day ſuch Prophets ſhall be aſhamed of themſelves, as that they ſhall diſclaim themſelves for very ſhame, to ſtand in any relation to ſuch Prophets, as (m) there the Prophet ſhews, when all their neareſt friends with contempt ſhall refuſe them, and run them through, ſaying, *Thou toldſt us lies in the Name*

(k) Luk. 10. 21.

(l) Zac. 13. 2.

(m) Zach. 13. 4, 5.

Name of the Lord; such light it seems shall then appear, as that they themselves shall count him no *Prophet*, that is so made by man's teaching. Now this teaching in question, is but man's teaching; and therefore when as the clear light appears, they shall be ashamed of it, though now they prefer it.

This Consideration also ministers matter of thankfulnesse to God on our parts, for his exceeding kindnesse towards us in *Christ Jesus*, for that he is pleased to reveal these great Mysteries to such mean and simple things as we are, when as he conceals them from the wise and prudent: This (*n*) use Christ Jesus himself makes, and gives us to understand the true cause why, and that he makes not any excellency in them more then was in others, but only according to the nature of the Gospel, the good pleasure of God, which is indeed the only ground of all our happinesse; and blessed must needs all those be that can with our Saviour truly conclude with the same. And so I come to the next point: For having found out who be the Learned men that *Peter* here intends, which is, they that are taught by the Spirit of God: then it must needs follow, that they that are not such, are the perverters of these and all other Scriptures to their own destruction: And so this is another Observation;

3 *Use*

(*n*) Mat. 11. 29.

That such as are destitute of the Spirits-teaching, though furnished with Humane Learning, are the perverters and wresters of these and all other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

The truth of this Conclusion appears plainly confirmed to us in the (*o*) *Pharisees*, as our Saviour declares in many particulars, plainly discovering the * *blindnesse of these learned Teachers*, in esteeming and preferring of things lesse in themselves, above such as were far greater: as the proportion is made betwixt the *Gold of the Temple*, and the *Temple*; and the *Altar*, and that which was *offered thereon*: And so blind were they, that they counted that *most holy*, which the *Temple* and the *Altar* made to be *holy*: And the same (*p*) elsewhere appears, that for all their Learning, they taught directly *against the mind of God in his Word*. We may see the same further commended to us in *Barjesus*, one full of all (*q*) *subtilty* in this kind, but a *turner from the Faith*, and not to it, and a *perverter of the straight wayes of God*. The like is to be observed in (*r*) those of whom *Paul* speaks, *that would be Doctors of the Law, and yet knew not what they said, nor whereof they affirmed*, so wise their Humane Learning did help to make them.

(*o*) Mat. 5. 21 * Mat. 23. *from* 16, *to* 19

(*p*) Mat. 15. *from* 3 *to* 7.

(*q*) Acts 13. 6

(*r*) 1 Tim. 1. 7

Reason 1

Now from the *Word of God*, good Reasons may be observed, further to confirm this; As first,

Because nothing but the *Spirit of God* can bring any to the *true knowledge of the Word of God*: And so saith the (*s*) Apostle, *We have received the Spirit of God, that we may know the things that are given us of God*: And *Peter* (*t*) tels us, *That no Scripture is of any private interpretation*: But in opposition to that, the Apostle sets the *Spirit*, and opposeth it to the *Will of Man*, and so declares that the *Spirits interpretation*, where it is, is a *publick interpretation*, and *not private*; and that Men, though indued with great Learning, having not the *Spirit of God*, can give but a *private interpretation*, according to the Apostles *intent*: Let men judge what they will, though it be the Pope, and all his Councils of Cardinals and Bishops, and the rest of that learned Rabble, yet they being destitute of the Spirit, can give but a private interpretation, according to the Apostles mind: whereas if a man have the *Spirit of God*, though he be a Pedler, Tinker, Chimney sweeper, or Cobler, he may by the help of Gods Spirit, give a more publick interpretation then they all; for, as (*u*) *Paul* saith of *Love*, the same is to be said of the *Spirit*, *Though men did speak with the tongues of Men and Angels, and knew all secrets, and had all knowledge, yet this is but as a sounding brasse, or tinkling Cymbal*, without the *Spirit*.

(*s*) 1 Cor. 2. 12.

(*t*) 2 Pet. 1. 20, 21.

(*u*) 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2.

Reason 2.

Another Reason is, Because this was one end of *Jesus Christ* his coming into the World, *That they that* (*x*) *see might be made blind*: And this clearly appears in the *Pharisees*, those learned wise men, that counted the common people as accursed, because not knowing the Law; and they themselves seeing, *blessed ones*: and therefore (*y*) say they, *Do any of the Rulers*, or *Pharisees believe in him*? as touching that the Rulers and Pharisees must needs know the Truth; when as these were *blind guides*, as our Saviour saith; and so much (*z*) these took notice of, that he so accounted them: And so also they that were *blind* in *mans sight*, as was the blind man there spoken of, *He sees the gift of God, and believes in Jesus Christ for his salvation*; and yet they refuse the knowledge and light of this (*a*) *seeing man*, and upbraid him for being born in *sins*, and for going about to teach them, scorning that such learned men as they should be taught of such as he was, though Jesus Christ hath made him learned, and given himself for him.

(*x*) Joh. 9. 39.

(*y*) Joh. 7. 48.

(*z*) Joh. 9. 40.

(*a*) Ver. 29.

Another Reason is rendred out of the words:

Because

Becauſe ſuch are unlearned and unſtable ones: For, as before we have ſeen, ſuch perſons are deſtitute of the true learning, ſo alſo are they in an unſetled and unſtable condition, ſeeing, as the Prophet (*b*) witneſſeth, *That the Spirit is the eſtabliſher*: neither can they be rooted and eſtabliſhed in the Faith, according to the (*c*) Apoſtles ſaying, ſeeing they be not *founded* on the *Rock Chriſt Jeſus*, but on the *ſands* of *Humane Learning*, ariſing from a fleſhly mind, deſtitute of the Spirit of Truth; for they have not learned, as the Truth is in Jeſus. *Reaſon 3.* (*b*) Pſal. 51. (*c*) Col. 2. 7.

Again, It muſt needs be ſo, that ſuch muſt pervert the Scriptures; becauſe it is impoſſible for them to go beyond their principle. Now their principle is Error, as the following words declare, and by it they be guided and led, even the whole heap of them, as big as it is; *and theſe ſhall ſatisfie mens luſts, and turn them from the Faith, unto Fables*, as the (*d*) Apoſtle long ago hath foretold: For, ſuch as are themſelves of the fleſh, turn all things to fleſhlineſſe, for that is it which they ſavour; For to the unclean all things are unclean, their conſciences being defiled, as (*e*) witneſſeth the Apoſtle: Hence was it that when as our Saviour (*f*) bade the Jews to *deſtroy this Temple*, meaning his (*g*) *body*: they themſelves being *carnal*, underſtood him to ſpeak of the Temple of *Jeruſalem*. And ſo the Capernaits, when as Jeſus Chriſt tels them, *He will give them of his* (*h*) *fleſh to eat*, they being *carnal*, cannot bear it, and all becauſe they be deſtitute of the Spirit, for it was in a ſpiritual ſenſe that he intended it. And the like is to be ſeen in *Nicodemas* a Phariſee, and ſo a *learned man*, being a Teacher, and a Ruler of the Jews, this man for all this, when as Jeſus Chriſt tels him, *that he muſt be born again*, otherwiſe *he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, he ſeeing no further then into the natural birth, demands how that could be, *that a man when he is old ſhould enter into his mothers Womb, and be born again?* ſo deſtitute was he of the ſpiritual meaning of the mind of Jeſus Chriſt in his Word. *Reaſon 4.* (*d*) 2 Tim. 4. 4, 5. (*e*) Tit. 1. 15 (*f*) Joh. 2. 29 (*g*) Ver. 29 (*h*) John 6. Verſ. 53. 60, 63. Joh. 5. 1, 3, 4.

Another Reaſon (me thinks) included in the words, is;

Becauſe ſuch perſons are uſually veſſels of Wrath, prepared to deſtruction, therefore they drive all to the ſame end, to which themſelves belong: *The Goſpel is the ſavour of life to life in them that are ſaved: but is the ſavour of death to them that periſh.* Yet would I not from hence have any to conclude, that I deny ſalvation to learned men, as ſome in effect have affirmed (as I hear) of me; *Reaſon 5.*

for

for the Scripture is againſt it, as is already before declared from the (*i*) Apoſtle, though there be *not many*. But yet this for certain is the worſt work that a carnal man can undertake, to meddle with the Scriptures, ſeeing that he abuſeth them, and that to his own deſtruction: for the *Word* is a Sword with two edges, which whoſoever that is carnal meddles with, it will run into his *heart*, to (*k*) *harden it againſt the day of Wrath*. And ſo I conceive the point is clear and plain, *That men without Gods Spirit, though furniſht with Humane Learning, do wreſt the Scriptures to their own deſtruction.*

(*i*) 1 Cor. 1. 26.

(*k*) Rom: 2.5

1 *Object.* But here it will then be demanded, *How ſhall We know Whether We have the Spirit of God, or the ſpirit of Error?*

Anſwer. I anſwer, That the Spirit of God is a ſufficient witneſſe to it ſelf, ſeeing that the *Spirit* is *Truth*. Now this agreeing, as it doth, with the *Word*, needs not any other *teſtimony* of it ſelf, becauſe it is the *witneſſe of God*, and that is the *greateſt*; as ſaith *John*, (*l*) *The Spirit beareth witneſſe*, for the *Spirit* is *Truth*: and again, *Hereby* (*m*) *We know that He abideth in us, even by the Spirit that He hath given us.*

(*l*) 1 Joh. 5.6

(*m*) 1 John 3

Next, It is to be known by its *operations* and *Works*: As firſt, it *ſavours ſpiritual things*. *They that are after the fleſh*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) (*n*) *ſavour the things of the fleſh*: *and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit*. And again, *The* (*o*) *Spirit is life for righteouſneſſe ſake*, and is ſaid to be of a (*p*) *quickning and an enlivening nature for righteouſneſs*. The fruits of it are further manifeſted in (*q*) other places. Now theſe things being found in us, do witneſſe for *GOD* againſt *Error*, though it ſet it ſelf up with never ſo high a hand. And yet here (me thinks) I hear the worldly *learned men* ſaying to me, as did (*r*) *Zedekiah*, *When went the Spirit of God from them to ſuch as I ſpake of*? To this I anſwer, That with *Zedekiah*, ſuch perſons do but beg the queſtion, and take for granted like him, that which they never had; for that could never depart from him which was never with him: therefore though he were great, and his companions many, as is (*ſ*) ſhewed, and that *Micaiah* was but one poor Prophet alone, and hated of the King, yet he had the *Spirit of God*, when as all the other were led and ruled by the *lying ſpirit*. And though *Jeſus Chriſt*, and his *learned ones*, cannot be believed of the great and honourable Prophets of the World, but by *Zedekiahs* ſhall be ſmitten on the cheek, when by them this queſtion is demanded of the *Lords Prophets*, yet this anſwer may be

(*n*) Rom: 8.5.
(*o*) Verſe 10.
(*p*) Verſe 11.
(*q*) Gal. 5.22, 23.

2 *Object.*
(*r*) 1 Kin. 22.24
Anſwer.

(*ſ*) Verſe 6

given

given them, that when as they come to hide themſelves in ſecret, and to be aſhamed of their *Viſion*, and that the (*t*) *ſeven laſt plagues* come to be fulfilled, ſpoken of in the *Revelations*, then they ſhall find the *truth* of the *teſtimony* that is born againſt them; though in the mean time the *ſervants* of the *Lord* be committed to priſon, there to *eat the bread of affliction*, & *the water of affliction* for their *teſtimony*. (*t*) Rev. 15. 1.

But though it be granted, that Humane Learning is no help to underſtand the mind of God, yet, *is it not uſeful to furniſh us with words to expreſſe our ſelves in the delivery of the Goſpel?* 3 *Object.*

I anſwer with *Paul*, That the whole *Scripture is given of God, and is profitable to make the man of God abſolute and throughly* (*u*) *furniſhed to every good work*: whence I conclude, that if the *Scripture be perfect and abſolute for every good work*, then it is ſo for that, ſo that then there is no need of *mans wiſdom* to help the *Miniſters of God*. And further, ſaith the Apoſtle, he *preached the* (*x*) *Goſpel, not with wiſdom of words*: If not with *wiſdom of words*, then I conclude they were needleſſe, and ſo much the next words declare, *leſt* (ſaith he) *I ſhould make the Croſſe of none effect*. And again, *I, Brethren*, (ſaith he) *When I came unto you, came not with* (*y*) *excellencie of ſpeech, or of wiſdom, ſhewing unto you the teſtimony of God*, but frees himſelf from it, denying that his *preaching ſtood in the* (*z*) *inticing words of mans wiſdom*; but on the contrary, *in the plain evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit*. And afterwards he gives the Reaſon for it, (*a*) *That their Faith ſhould not be in the wiſdom of men*, by which it ſeems it is ſubject ſo to be, if that were uſed. And ſo we find that indeed it is, and not *in the power of God, by the plain demonſtration of the Spirit*. And though in all this one would think the Apoſtle had ſaid enough in this matter for the manner of the delivering of the *Truth*, yet for all this he hath not done with it, but minds it yet (*b*) again, ſaying, *Which things as we know them, ſo we alſo ſpeak, not with words Which mans wiſdom teacheth*. And ſo again, he (*c*) ſlightly paſſeth over the words of the falſe Teachers, as not worth the knowing or regarding: therefore he ſaith, *When he comes, he will know, not their words, but their power*. And ſo again, he condeſcends to the falſe Teachers ſo far, as to confeſs, *that he was* (*d*) *rude in ſpeaking, but not ſo in knowledge*: By all which places it plainly appears, that *mans wiſdom is to be rejected*, even in *ſpeaking the Word of God*, and that none are to affect any excellencie that way, but to content themſelves even with the uſe

Anſw. 3

(*u*) 2 Tim. 3. 16.

(*x*) 1 Cor. 1. 17

(*y*) 1 Cor. 2. 1

(*z*) Verſe 4.

(*a*) Verſe 5

(*b*) 1 Cor. 2. 13.

(*c*) 1 Cor. 4. 19.

(*d*) 1 Cor. 11. 6.

use of the *natural abilities* they have, without any art or skill in learning further.

Object. 4. *But* Apollos *is said to be* an eloquent man, *and mighty in the Scriptures, Acts* 18. 24.

Answer. And so doubtlesse was *Paul*, and *Moses*, and those mentioned in *Acts* 19. and yet, as I have before manifested, that when as all these came to receive the Faith, they left, forsook and contemned all that: so do I believe was it here with this man, that when as he came to be taught further in the knowledge of Christ, that he then became more and more sutable to the *rudenesse* and *simplicity of preaching the Gospel*, aswel as *Paul*, for never afterwards do we read that he was commended by that term; for such manner of excellency was proper to the Law, and not to the Gospel in any degree. But, Secondly, Take it for granted that he persisted in his *Eloquence*, yet it appears that it was such as he had obtained by being *mighty in the Scriptures*: And this also further justifies a former Answer, *That the Scripture alone is sufficient to furnish us with expression.* So now the point remaining true for all this, *That men destitute of the Spirit, having Humane Learning, do pervert the Scriptures to their own destruction.*

Use 1. This in the first place may teach all men, that are without Gods Spirit, how wise and learned otherwise they seem to be, to beware of medling with the *Scriptures*, it is the worst work that possibly they can undertake, for in so doing they meddle with that in which they have no skill, and so wound themselves: for it is a *sharp two-edged sword*, and they having no skill to handle it, to be sure it will dangerously wound them, to their own destruction: But seeing the *truth* is so, as that they have neither *ears to hear*, nor *hearts to understand it*, therefore I will thus passe it over: And,

Use 2. In the next place, take notice, That such persons without Gods Spirit, what ever they be else, yet they be both *unlearned* and *unstable men*, according to the mind of God: So the (*e*) *unbeliever* is called of *Paul*, *an unlearned man*: And so much in effect (*f*) *James* tels us, of a faithless mans inconstancy, that *he is tost about like a wave*, and is *unstable in all his wayes* of Religion; for indeed, wanting the Spirit to establish him, he is driven hither and thither of every blast and breath of *mans wisdom*; and so much experience, without any more Scriptures, daily proves, upon every change of *Orders* and *Ordinances of Religion*: How confident have many wise worldly

(*e*) 1 Cor. 14. 24.

(*f*) Jam. 1. 6, 7, 8.

Learned

Learned men been of their *ſtability*, for being brought to yeeld to this or that, when as the raging wave of the Sea hath roared but a *little*, how have theſe men fallen from their ſuppoſed ſtability and ſtedfaſtneſſe? ſo that inſtances I need not name, every ones ſmall experience can bring forth enough: But from all this there is given us to ſee the Scriptures fulfilled before our eyes, for our confirmation, and their juſt conviction.

Uſe 3. Now in the next place, I will manifeſt in ſome few particulars, how theſe *learned men*, but according to *Peters* intent *unlearned men*, do pervert the Scriptures, making their interpretations as carnal as themſelves: for when as the Scriptures ſpeak of Learning, and ſo by it do for the moſt part commend unto us the *Learning of the Spirit of Truth*, as before we have ſeen from this Text, and many more places; theſe perſons preſently apply them to Humane Learning, and the Texts are all by them wreſted and perverted: and in this kind many inſtances might further be alleaged. Firſt, concerning the Church. Whereas the Scriptures do authorize Chriſtians to gather themſelves together in Chriſt's Name, and ſo have the (*g*) promiſe of Gods preſence in ſo doing. This they preſently deny to be the intent of the place, and ſay, it is to be meant of two or three coming together in performance of Prayer, or ſuch like, contrary to the ſcope of the place, which treats only of ſuch as are in Church-Order, and have committed to them the power of binding and looſing, with the promiſe of Chriſt Jeſus his approving of the ſame by them: And beſides, Where in the Scripture is Chriſt Jeſus ſaid to be in the mids of any but his (*h*) Churches? And further, Whereas the Scriptures ſpeak of the Church, Temple, and Houſe of God, applying theſe ſayings to Believers, and ſuch as are (*i*) *builded upon Chriſt by faith*; Theſe they wreſt and pervert, in applying theſe Titles to their houſes of lime and ſtone, calling them the Houſes of God, and Temples for Him to dwell in; though the Scriptures be plain to the contrary, as *Stephen* declared to the (*k*) Council long ago, and that from the teſtimony of the (*l*) Prophet long before: and ſo our (*m*) Saviour himſelf to the woman of *Samaria*, denying for the time to come any ſuch places, as the Jews and Samaritans doted on, but tels her, and us, That Spiritual Service in (*n*) *any place*, as he ſaith himſelf, ſhould pleaſe him, though it will not give carnal men content. Likewiſe, are not the Scriptures alleadged frequently by theſe Learned men for the Nation and People for being the Church of God? And for the ſame

(*g*) Mat. 18. 20.

(*h*) Levit. 26. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Pſa. 132. 13, 14. Rev. 13. 1. Rev. 2. 1.

(*i*) 2 Cor. 6. 16. *with* Heb. 3. 6. *with* 1 Pet. 2. 5.

(*k*) Acts 7. 47, 48, 50.

(*l*) Iſa. 66. 1.

(*m*) Joh: 4. 21.

(*n*) Matth. 18. 20.

end, National Observances, as the High-Priest, consecrated and set apart for the services of the Church, and so under him the rest of the holy Priests, with their holy Garments, and Tithes and such like for their maintenance; and for this purpose the Scriptures alleaged in a most plentiful manner, both from the Law and the Prophets, for the justifying of their Names, Orders and Administrations; when as if it be spiritually discerned, and the Scriptures not wrested nor perverted, it will be found true, as *Peter* (o) saith, That not every Nation, nor any more any Nation, but *in every Nation them that fear the Lord*, and none other, *are accepted of him*: Whereas Christ Jesus himself hath told us, That the (q) *Beasts* should have *power over every Kinred, Nation and Tongue*, and that the *National Cities should fall*: whereas *Mount Sion*, the City of God, shall never be moved, as saith the (r) Prophet, and also the Apostle. By this then it appears, that all such Scriptures as are alleaged for the maintenance of a *National Church*, are perverted, being that long since the Lord hath rejected it. Now accounting a company of Saints in fellowship with Himself, to be (s) *Mount Sion*, that shall never be moved; and these he hath made (t) *Kings and Priests to God*. The like we may see in the Ministers of the Church; seeing that they were of old times in that Church to be honourable persons in outward honour and esteem, for their names, *Priests*; for their callings, above the rest of the people, *a distinct body of themselves*; for their apparel, *different in their administrations from other of the people*; and so for their maintenance, by *Tithes* and *Offerings*: all which had a respect to *Christ*, and were in him to have their end, as the Apostle (u) declares, as being but *Worldly rudiments*.

(o) Acts 10. 14, 15.
(p) Rev: 13. 7 with Rev. 16. 19.
(q) Psal. 125. Psal. 1.
(r) Heb. 12.
(s) Rev. 14. 1. Ps. 14. 9. *from* 6 *to* 9.
(t) Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 10. 1 Pet. 2 9.
(u) Gal. 4. 12

Yet these men, though they professe themselves *Ministers of Jesus Christ*, and under the Gospel, yet Childlike, as under *Tutors and Governors*, do yet observe these things, *after the rudiments of the World*: and so sutably to the Gospel, cannot abide to approve themselves to be Ministers of Christ by such marks as his Word affords, as we have (x) before considered; but they must be men of honour, and such as be distinct from others, in their apparel, maintenance, and such like: dishonour and reproach, and nakedness, and living on meer alms they cannot brook: but they be so far from working with their *own hands for their own necessities*, as the Apostle requires that the (y) Ministers of the Gospel should do, as that they wrest the Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets, haling in (as it were)

(x) 2 Cor. 6. *from* 4. *to* 10.
(y) Acts 2. 33, 34, 35.

were) by the hair of the head, the Scriptures to ſpeak for them and their delicious living, faring like *Dives*, deliciouſly every day; whereas the Elders of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhould (z) *feed the flock of God* not caring for it for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. (z) 1 Pet. 5. 1, 2.

But leaving theſe things, and ſuch as theſe are, which declare them to be more ſutable for *Moſes* and the *Law*, which tends unto wrath and bondage, then ſuch as are Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, and made partakers of the liberty of the Servants of God.

I will ſpeak of ſome few things that are in difference among them and us. You know it is uſually objected againſt us, becauſe of our departure, out of the (a) words of *Peter* to our Saviour, being theſe, *Whither ſhall we go? thou haſt the words of eternal life*: from whence is concluded againſt us, if the Text be not perverted, that we in leaving them, do forſake Jeſus Chriſt, wherein they take it for granted that he is with them, and not with thoſe that forſake them: whereas the Text is clear to prove, that the words of eternal life are in Him; as (b) himſelf ſaith alſo, *The words that I ſpeak are ſpirit and life*; and this who denies, but that *he that hath the Son hath life*; *he that hath not the Son, hath no life*: But let not the Text be wreſted: Yet what proof is here that *Antichriſt* hath the words of eternal life, and that there is no forſaking of him? and yet all that know wherein the difference lyes, know that this is the Controverſie; and how that theſe perſons, thus forſaking, go to Chriſt, and to the word of eternal life, ſeeing that the Lord (c) *binds the teſtimony, and ſeals up the Law among his Diſciples*; ſo that till it can be proved that theſe leave Chriſt, and forſake the words of eternal life, the Text muſt be taken for none other but to be perverted, and a vail drawn over it, to beguile the ſimple.

Object. 1. with the Anſwer.

(a) Joh. 6. 68

(b) John 6

(c) Iſa. 8. 16

Upon this ſame Head hangs another great Exception againſt us, which is, *Where had We our converſion* (if we have any) *if not among them*? and ſo taking it for granted that we had it among them; A great out-cry is made againſt us, as if we had ſtoln their gods, and done them great wrong, and for this purpoſe, this amongſt other things is alleaged, *That that Church which is able to beget, is able to bring up.*

Object. 2

(d) Pſa: 19. 7 Rom: 1. 16 1 Pet: 1. 3. 23

Now for anſwer hereunto, it is to be minded, That converſion doth properly belong to the (d) Word of the Lord. Now this Word by which we are all begotten, is the proper portion of the Church of God, as (e) divers Scriptures declare: Hence then muſt it needs fol-

(e) Pſal. 147. 19, 20 Mat: 13. 11 1 Cor: 3. 22

low, That whosoever are converted to the Lord, those by vertue of their conversion belong to the true Church; because, as is beforesaid, the Word is hers, and therefore they are to cleave to her, and forsake those places where they were converted, and that for this reason, because the Lord himself is (*f*) said to count, when as he writes the people that this man was born there; that is, in *Sion*, the Church of God, though that the man were converted in mans account in *Babel* and *Palestina*, yet the Lord when he counts, shall write the converted man to be born in *Sion his Church*: Now all Gods People should count and write as God doth, and give *Babel* no honour at all of their conversion, because the Lord doth not give her any: And the same thing is abundantly seen in the Converts, that they are exhorted to (*g*) leave those places where they were converted, and so they did, as the (*h*) *Scripture* manifesteth in many places, which might be noted.

(*f*) Psa. 78. 6

(*g*) Act. 2: 42

(*h*) Act. 2. 44. & 17. 4. 34

Again, It is to be minded that God Himself counts all the *Faithfull* to belong to the (*i*) *Woman*, the *Church of God*, as appears in the *Revelations*, where the *Man-child*, as is evident by (*k*) other places, contains all the *Faithful*, even the whole *Church of God*. This *Son of God*, and his *Man-child*, is called his (*l*) *People*. The like appears in *Isa.* 66. 7, 8. where the *Man-child* is interpreted to be *a whole Nation of Children*, including all the *Faithful*. Now this *Woman* is said to be in *travel crying*; and if yours be that Church that is in this *travel crying*, and in *pain*, according to the Scriptures, I am content the *Child* shall be acknowledged yours, but if it be in *jollity*, and without *sorrow*, putting the others to pain, and ready to cut the *living Child in pieces*, how then can I acknowledge it for the *true mother*, when as also the Apostle saith, *That Jerusalem that is from above, is the* (*m*) *Mother of us all*? and she is not one that *gendreth to bondage*, but *to freedom*, as saith the Apostle; and therefore me thinks it appears that every ones *conversion* strongly binds him to make speed to that *Church*, which consists of such as are *faithful in Jesus Christ*, as being the proper inheritance to which they all belong, and to know that all such places as are alleaged to conclude otherwise, be but wrested and perverted, though never so fair a glosse be set upon them; for God ever since the beginning hath *put enmity betwixt the seed of the Woman, and the seed of the Serpent*: and accursed shall all they be that joyn those together, that God hath so far *separated*; and therefore let none of *Gods Servants* stand

(*i*) Rev. 12. 4, 5

(*k*) Exod. 4. 22, 23

(*l*) Exod. 5. 1

(*m*) Gal. 4. 24

ſtand with one foot on *Mount-Sion*, and another on *Babylon*, leſt that which is *halting* be turned out of the way, *Heb.* 12.

Another Objection againſt us is brought in the defence of your Miniſtery after this manner. *Object.*

That Miniſtery that doth the work of the Miniſtery of Jeſus Chriſt, ſpoken of in Epheſ. 4. *for the perfecting of the Saints, is a true Miniſtery, but your Miniſtery (you ſay) doth the ſame work, &c.*

Was it the *work* of the Miniſtery of the Apoſtles, &c. to read *Divine Service, Church Women, Marry, and bury the Dead*, and ſuch like Services as theſe are? Did the Apoſtles *perfect the Saints* after this manner? For, who knows not but that this is the ſubſtance of what your Office of Miniſtery binds you unto? as for *Preaching* that may be diſpenced withall, and a little now and then may ſerve the turn. *Anſwer.*

Beſides, as is granted, your Offices are not the ſame there mentioned, that *Jeſus Chriſt from on high gave gifts unto*; for you have others, that the *Scripture* ſpeaks not of any otherwiſe, then by the (*n*) *names of Blaſphemy*: But for the power and work of the Miniſtery, which, you ſay, is anſwerable to that of the Apoſtles, by your gathering of the Saints together, taking it for granted that you ſay: From what do you convert them? If from the *power of darkneſſe*, as you would ſeem to imply, into the *Kingdom of Chriſt*, as did the (*o*) Apoſtle, then, by your own grant, in the *power of darkneſſe you found them*; and the truth is, that where you found them, there you leave them: When you found them before their *converſion*, you profeſſed of them, that they were *regenerate* and *born anew*: To what then do you *convert them?* or, have you *converſion* after *regeneration?* You alſo bade theſe perſons before, *To take, and eat, in remembrance that Chriſt died for them*, and ſo give them the *Seals of Life* and *Salvation*; and yet after all this, you being Miniſters to them, come to juſtifie the truth of your *Miniſtery* by your *converſion* of theſe *People*, that by theſe things have no need of *amendment*; and yet when all is done that you plead for, they ſtill abide in the ſame *Church*, under the ſame *Miniſtery*, in the ſame *Worſhip* that they were converſant in before, when as I have declared before, that when as the Apoſtle converted any, thoſe *Converts* left their former places, turning from *dumb Idols, to ſerve the living God*. Now it hath been long acknowledged and profeſſed, *That the*

(*n*) Rev. 17. 3

(*o*) Col. 1. 13

Worſhip

Worſhip of your Church, and the Miniſtery of it came out of the Popes ſhop, and muſt needs be reformed, or elſe the Judgement of GOD cannot but light upon you, as hath been manifeſted in the *firſt and ſecond Admonition to the Parliament, in the dayes of* Q. ELIZABETH, and all know that yet it continues the ſame that then it was: and if it were ſo bad then, as it is reported that a thouſand Miniſters ſaid it was, ſmall cauſe have any to plead *converſion*, when as they ſhall continue in ſuch abominations, as that the plagues of God cannot, by their own confeſſion, be with-held; ſeeing that the *Scriptures*, and *Spirit of God* teacheth us, That (*p*) *the fear of the Lord teacheth men to refrain their feet from every evil way*, and *to cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſſe both of fleſh and ſpirit*, and *to grow up unto full holineſſe in the fear of God*, or the *Worſhip of God*, as our Saviour (*q*) interprets it, and *to hate the very* (*r*) *garment ſpotted by the fleſh*. Now theſe things well conſidered, it wil appear that the ſeveral Scriptures that are continually brought for the maintenance of your Miniſtery, are but as ſo many flouriſhes by which the *Word of Truth* is wreſted and wringed like a *noſe of Wax*, contrary to their proper intents and ſcopes, to ſerve your own turns; which who they be of you, or others, that are the perverters of them, God knows, and one day will judge betwixt the *righteous* and the *Wicked*, and give to every one according as his works ſhall be: In the mean while to me it appears plain, That *men deſtitute of the Spirit of God*, be they as *learned* as may be in *Mans Learning*, yet they do *pervert all Scriptures, to their own deſtruction*; when as the *unlearned* one, ſimple men and women, having the *Spirit of Truth* in them, ſhall rightly know them, and *Gods mind* in them, for their *great comfort*.

(*p*) Pſal. 119. 101.

(*q*) Mat. 4. 2 Cor. 2. 1.

(*r*) Jude 23.

Again, Seeing this is ſo, that ſuch men do thus pervert the Scriptures, this ſhould provoke all that are made able Miniſters of the Spirit, as ſaith the (*ſ*) Apoſtle, that they take the ſame Apoſtles advice, ſaying, (*t*) *If thou put the Brethren in remembrance of theſe things, thou ſhalt be a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt*: If thou put the Brethren in remembrance of theſe things: What things? Thoſe things mentioned (*u*) before, how that the Spirit hath foretold of Doctrines of Devils, how that men ſhould ſpeak lies through hypocriſie, &c. as *Zachary* alſo foretold that the (*x*) Father and Mother of the Prophet ſhould ſay, that *he told them lies in the Name of the Lord*: If thou put the Brethren in remembrance of theſe things, be-

(*ſ*) 2 Cor. 3. 2.

(*t*) 1 Tim. 4 6

(*u*) *from the* 1. Verſe.

(*x*) Zach. 13. 3

cauſe

cauſe they are ſubject to forget them, and thou ſhouldſt be their Remembrancer, which if thou do, thou ſhalt be a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, which haſt been nouriſhed up in the words of Faith and good Doctrine: then mark; theſe things are not error nor lies, nor he a falſe teacher that ſpeaketh of them, but a good Miniſter that hath been nouriſht up in Faith and good Doctrine, which was continually taught of *Paul*, and heard of *Timothy*; And to this is to be added what the Apoſtle (*y*) ſaith further in this matter, declaring, that he that conſenteth not to wholſom Doctrine, that is according to godlineſſe, is puft up and knows nothing, but dotes about words, and is ſuch a one as is ſo far corrupted by the fleſh, as that he is to be ſeparated from: Therefore Gods good Miniſters, as we ſee, ſhould be careful of theſe things, as knowing of whom they ſhall receive their reward, and what ſhall alſo be their portion from men of the world, in that which is (*z*) *death* in the world, but (*a*) *life* with the Lord; *Be faithful therefore to the death, and you ſhall have a* (*b*) *Crown of life*: declaring the power of the Spirit of the Lord in you.

(*y*) 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4.

(*z*) Rev. 11. 7
(*a*) Rev. 14 13
(*b*) Rev. 2. 10

Now in the laſt place, I will conclude with the exhortation of the (*c*) Apoſtle in the words following. Ye therefore, Beloved, ſeeing ye knew theſe things before, (what things? among others, theſe, *That Worldly learned men*, are Gods *unlearned men*, being deſtitute of his Spirit) beware, and take heed, leſt ye alſo aſwell as others (you being ſubject to it) be plucked away before you be aware, into the *error of the Wicked*, to think that *Gods Myſteries* can be attained to by *Mans Learning*, and ſo you fall from your own *ſtedfaſtneſs*, which is (*d*) *through Faith*; for, *by Faith ye ſtand*, and *by the Spirit*; for, by it ye are alſo (*e*) *eſtabliſht*: and for a preſervative againſt this *error*, as oppoſit to it, *Grow and increaſe in the grace of God, and the knowledge of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, which is that that will preſerve you from *error*. Now to Him be *glory*, not to us, nor to man, but to Him, our *Lord* JESUS CHRIST, both now and for evermore. *Amen*.

Uſe 5

(*c*) 2 Pet: 3. 16, 18

(*d*) Rom: 11.
(*e*) Pſal. 51.

ISA. 44. 25.

The Lord fruſtrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad, turneth wiſe men backward, and maketh their knowledge fooliſhneſſe.

FINIS.

WHat How! *how now? hath* How *ſuch learning found?*
To throw Arts curious Image to the ground:
Cambridge *and* Oxford, *may their glory now,*
Vail to a Cobler, *if they knew but* How:
Though big with Art, they cannot over top
The SPIRIT's Teaching *in a* Coblers ſhop.
Reader, *if thou an Humane Artiſt be,*
Let Humane Learning *be no judge for thee:*
Lay down thine Arts: then this Coblers End,
And ſee, if it be by the SPIRIT *pend.*
Mean time adue, ye Arts and Artiſts all;
The SPIRIT's Teaching *may attend the* Aul.
And thou, brave Cobler, *blow another blaſt*
Upon their Learning, though thou blow thy LAST.

R. O.